COMMODORE USER

March 1986
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Phone Games-line super prizes



Yie Ar Kung Fu
Vs
Kung Fu Master
Fists fly!
EXCLUSIVE

C16/Plus 4
COMMANDO

50 to be won

Lord of the Rings
Doomdark's Revenge
reviewed

C128 latest
software tests



LORD OF THE RINGS
GAME ONE
"The most advanced, original and involving adventure you will ever play... Without peer in terms of scope, imagination and involvement." – Popular Computing Weekly
LORD OF THE RINGS Game 1 is available on C64, BBC, Spectrum and Amstrad at £15.95.
MELBOURNE HOUSE

CONTENTS

MARCH



REGULARS

SCREEN SCENE

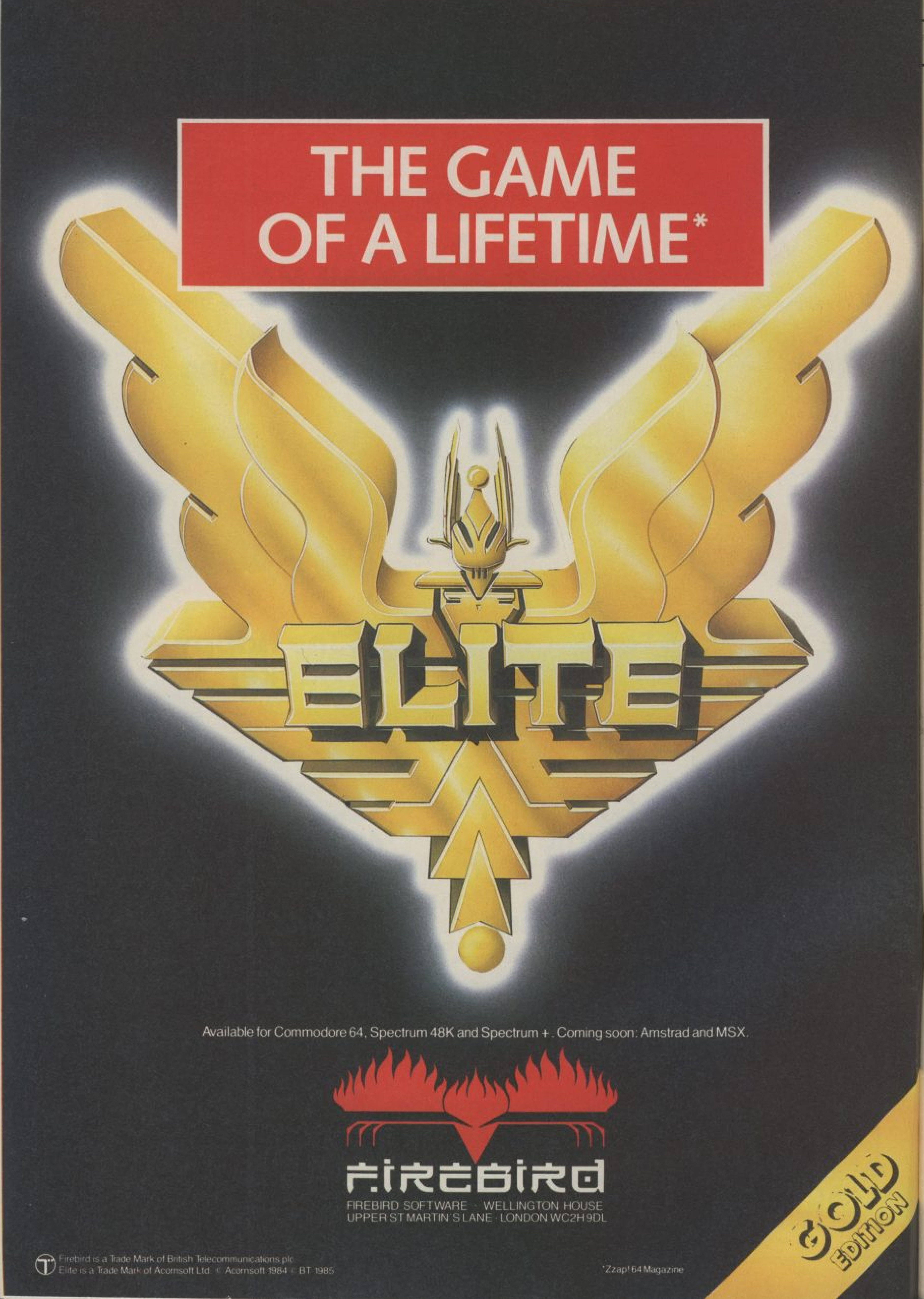
PEOPLE

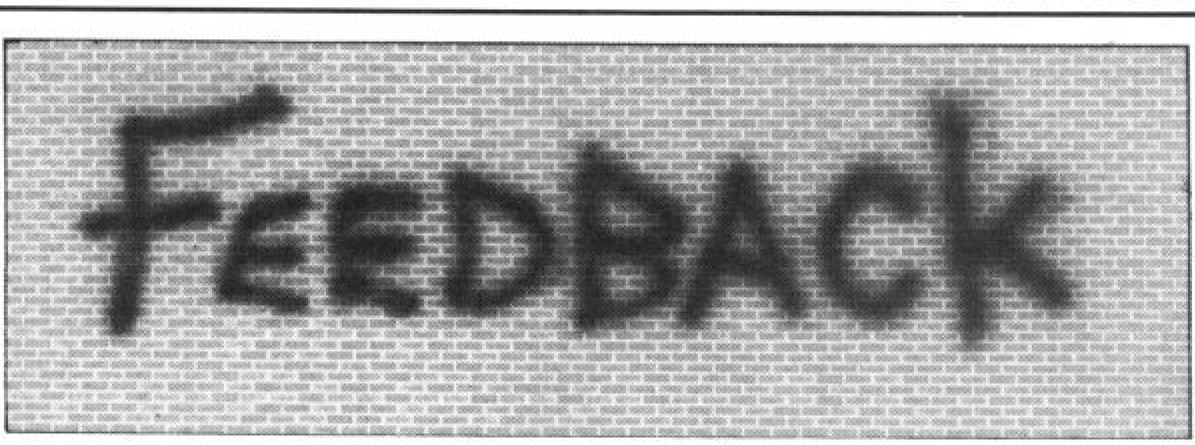
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Registered Offices:
Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.
Cover Logo Electronic Arts

Commodore User is published twelve times a year by EMAP Business and Computer Publications Ltd.
Subscriptions and Back Issues are handled by B.K.T. Subscription Services, Dowgate Works, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 2TS. Telephone: 0732 351216.
Annual subscription (UK) £12.00, (Eire) £IRL 17.00, (Europe) £18.00, (Rest of the World) £32.00.
Printed by Garrod & Lofthouse Ltd, Crawley; Photosetting and reproduction by Bow-Towning Ltd, London EC1.
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ISSN 0265-721X
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THE GAME
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*Zzap! 64 Magazine
GOLD EDITION



Sweet charity

Dear CU,
I am writing to complain about the software industry's decision to give money from the 'Off the Hook' charity tape to drug addicts. Surely there are more deserving causes than a bunch of idiots who choose to kill themselves by taking harmful substances? What about old people or the sick?

I am all in favour of charity work, but why drugs? Give it to those who deserve it.
Bruce Allen,
Basildon, Essex.

• Drug addicts are victims in their own way, you can't knock people for trying to help the disadvantaged. At least this industry acknowledges responsibility to the public. Having said that, it was a surprising choice of charity in some ways. Anybody out there got an opinion on this one?

Pet corner

Dear CU,
I am writing to you because I need help. Yes, I've tried radio phone-ins and agony aunts but no-one seems interested in my predicament.

My problem is Adam, my adopted pet computer person. He won't pay any attention to me. Whenever I ask him to do something he ignores me. Not once has he offered to play a game with me.

Can it be that he just doesn't like me or am I doing something wrong?
Worried Owner,
Blackpool.

• Dear Worried, You seem to have been most unfortunate in your choice of pet person, he seems a grumpy little swine. You have two options: punish him by starvation, lack of petting and general rudeness; or be more polite — grovel to him.

For anyone else with pet person worries our consultant is always willing to give advice.

Sun City reader

Dear CU,
I am an avid fan of your publication but Mike Pattenden's 'Soweto Riot' comment in last September's Hotshots was a below the belt blow for your many South African readers. How politics could ever get into a computer magazine totally bewilders me!

However, even more frustrating is the comment, "put down the revolting natives". For someone who is apparently making a political statement, this is a racialist comment!

Does *Commodore User* regard black people as 'natives' — primitive people who roam the jungle?

Making a reference to blacks as 'natives' would invite a blow on the head here in South Africa. If *Commodore User* holds something against South Africans, why sell your magazine here?

I know you won't print my letter, but unless you print an apology, I will not buy your magazine again.

We do not need political statements in our favourite computer magazine! Let Mike Pattenden picket our embassy, but please just review the games.
Michael de Braglio,
Johannesburg,
South Africa.

• Oh, dear, ever heard of irony? Your fear of politics totally bewilders me — how did they ever get into South Africa I wonder? Sorry to depress you but even in our industry nasty old politics gets a foot in the door: charity, tapes, Falklands games, Commodore making hundreds redundant, fundamentalist Republicans pretending that bombing Moscow is a game. M.P.

Infocom info.

Dear CU,
I would like to inform your readers of a new adventurers club just for Infocom owners. There will be a newsletter with hints, tips and a helpline. If anyone is interested, please send me an S.A.E. to the address below. Thanks.
Chris Cobb,
30, Hatton, Ave.,
Wellingborough,
Northants,
NN8 3AP.

Pen friends?

Dear CU,
I am a 21-year-old Dutch boy, and a Commodore 64 user. I would like to correspond with an English Commodore 64 owner, to exchange information about all the possibilities of the Commodore 64, and so on. Could you please help me find somebody to correspond with by placing this letter in your "Feedback" column?
René Groenewoud,
Onyx 15,
1703 CD,
Heerhugowaard,
The Netherlands.

Elitist

Dear CU,
I am writing about the tips given for *Elite* in your generous free booklet in the February 1986 issue. It is incorrectly stated that Trumbles are found in "Whichspace", as they are offered to you by the Merchant Prince of Thron if you've a spare 5000 credits! Only one is offered, which soon multiplies. They can only be got rid of by flying close to the sun. Using an Escape Pod always seems to leave one behind!

I would like to know why everyone is suddenly calling it 'Whichspace' — the area in between hyperspace occupied by Thargons. In the *Elite* manual it calls it 'Witch' space.

I have *Elite II* by the way, which is on a green floppy disk! The only difference to the original Elite is that Firebird have sneakily put a new piece of music on the title screen, and any attempts to alter a saved file to gain Elite status that work with Elite, don't work with Elite II.

I have played the game most evenings for a couple of weeks and already own plenty of equipment — I find the docking computer invaluable as it never fails (unless you hit a ship coming out of the station — this once happened a *second* before I was about to dock. Game over!). I have found it best only to switch the computers on to dock when you clearly see the shape of the space-station in your sights, otherwise you are merely travelling at less-than-full speed towards it. I must sign off now, though, I think there's a Python on my tail . . .
Commander Flash,
Above Average,
Galaxy 3.

• Thanks for the info, we'll be having a word with our own Elitist Fred Reid.



Biggles flies a game

Mirrorsoft have announced that they are working on a game based on the old Captain W. E. Johns hero Biggles. The game ties in with a new spoof film currently under production and due for release in the Spring.

Biggles, the film, features a seventy year time span between the First World War and the modern world via a time machine which enables Biggles to meet his time twin.

The game is broadly based on the film and features four separate stages combining "unique elements" with "classic styles of game play". Though primarily strategy-based, the last part is a flight simulator scenario.

"We're only at storyboard stage", says Mirrorsoft's Pat Bitton, "but there are a lot of novel ideas already." Spectacular sound effects are also planned for inclusion.

Biggles is due for release in late May at £9.95 (cass).

Shorts

Plus/4 saved: Three (and a half) cheers to Software Designs who've rectified Commodore's megagaff on the Plus/4. Frustrated users of the aforementioned know that you can only load and save files from the built-in software to disk. Now you can use tape, with a new program called *Three Plus One* which costs just £4.95. It won't work with the database, though, because that uses 'random access' files — spreadsheet and wp files work just fine. One more plus is that files can be easily transferred if you do decide to upgrade to disk. Three Plus One appears in the latest Softpost catalogue from Commodore (tel: 0536 205555).

PLUS/4 BLUES

Since Christmas the CU offices have been flooded with letters and telephone calls from new Plus/4 owners complaining about the lack of software for their new machine.

Many hapless buyers also complained that they bought the Plus/4 under the impression that it would run 64 software.

The truth is there is very little software available for the Plus 4 — and almost all of it is obtainable only through Commodore's Softpost mail-order service.

Commodore executive, Gail Wellington, denied that the company were being unfair in selling a computer that had little if any software support. "There is more software coming through and we have no intention of not supporting it". she told CU.

On the games front, PLus/4 owners will have to content themselves with C16 games — all of which are compatible — and are listed in full in our C16/Plus 4 round-up in this issue.

GAME KILLER

A gamer's life was never easier. We've had maps, Pokes for infinite lives, and even 24-page Commodore User supplements on the subject of game beating. But now we have the games aid to top them all — Robtek's *Game Killer*.

This plug-in cartridge enables you to break into certain programs that have been driving you up the wall and simply sail through to the final screen.

A prototype Game Killer was demonstrated in the CU offices last week and we all had to stand back in amazement as Mastertronic's *Kick Start* was sliced through — like a knife through butter.

The device works by freezing certain sprites — whilst letting other functions as normal. For example, in *Impossible Mission* your agent can dash through the rooms, take the lift, and search the rooms whilst the droids just stand and watch.

The bad news about Game Killer, though, is that it will not work with all games. It can only work with those that monitor "sprite collision" — which is what happens when two moving objects bump into each other.

As a rough guide *Beach Head, Impossible Mission,* and *Monty on the Run* can be "killed" but *Rambo* and *Commando* can't. The Game Killer is available from Robtek at £14.95. More info on 01-209 0118.

Shorts

Books corner: Prize for the wackiest book yet published for the Commodore 64 goes to Collins with their latest title, called *Football Pools with the Commodore 64* (£7.95). A quick browse through its pages shows that you have to key in a mammoth forecasting program called F4. My Uncle Brian reckons the dartboard method is still the best.

Last month we gave you the wrong number for a company called Venturegate. The number should read: 0532 661834

Good times, bad times



In every cloud there lies a silver lining except, it seems, in those that hang over Commodore's ill-fated Corby assembly plant. Only eighteen months after opening it with an embarrasing display of 'we're backing Britain' enthusiasm, Commodore announced its closure in early January, with the subsequent loss of 250 jobs.

The 64 and 128 machines assembled at Corby will probably now be made in Commodore's German plant in Brunswick. And Commodore's Chris Kaday is confident that this should not affect the level of supply and service in the UK: "We don't expect any diverse effects in these areas". Taking into consideration Commodore's already 'adverse' service record, those words sound rather hollow.

Amiga goes public

The Amiga did help to lift the general air of gloom when it attracted large crowds at the January Which Computer Show in its first UK public outing. To be fair, though, there was little else for the jaded businessman to enthuse over, a sign that the computer business generally is losing its nerve — and probably a lot of money.

Showgoers may have drooled over the Amiga's sound and graphics but found no evidence that big-name business software will be available for it; there was absolutely no sign of a good wordprocessor, a reputable database or spreadsheet. And if businesses can't be persuaded to buy it, at over £1,000, who else will?

What we saw displayed was less than encouraging: Taurus Impex showed a fledgling database called *Acquisition*, both Y2 Computing and Talbot Computers had comms and viewdata software, Nine Tiles had a network system. More interesting, Cygnet Computing showed *Amiga Front Desk*, a typesetting, art and production package, whilst the American Tecmar company displayed its somewhat overpriced Amiga-compatible 20MB hard disk dive. Music Sales, who produce Music Maker for the 64/128, demonstrated some synthesiser software.

At least Commodore made an impact at Which Computer, which it didn't do a week earlier at CES, America's largest microcomputing event. Why not? Simply because it wasn't there, and the reason for that is probably more to do with a lack of software than a lack of funds to pay for the binge.



The absence will have added fuel to the war Atari and Commodore are currently waging in America. Atari claims to have more than 100 software titles already available for the 520ST — and it's not all games.

What's more, you can actually go into a shop and buy the ST. And to rub salt into the wounds, you'll come out with a lot of change from £1,000. The Amiga is due to be shipped to the UK at the end of March; let's hope the price-tag doesn't have one too many noughts on it.

• Shorts •

MPS Descenders: MPS 801 printer users will know what descenders are and know that they can't get them. So MPS Software has come to the rescue with a replacement chip (£14.95) that redefines the character set to produce the tails on letters like 'p' and 'g'. Of course there's a trade-off: to get the extra dot at the bottom they had to take one off the top. So characters, especially capitals, look a little squashed — but there's a definite overall improvement. Contact MPS on 01-800 3592 for more info.

• Shorts •

First books for 128: Following the success of its 'Anatomy' series of books for the Commodore 64, First Publishing has acquired three more titles, this time for the new 128. Called *Anatomy of the C-128, Anatomy of the 1571* and *C-128 Tricks and Tips,* they'll cost around £13 each. All three books were originally written by Data Becker in Germany, from whom First has also acquired a disk-based Compiler for the 128. That's just finishing translation and will retail at £24.95. Contact First on 07357 5244 for more information.

• Shorts •

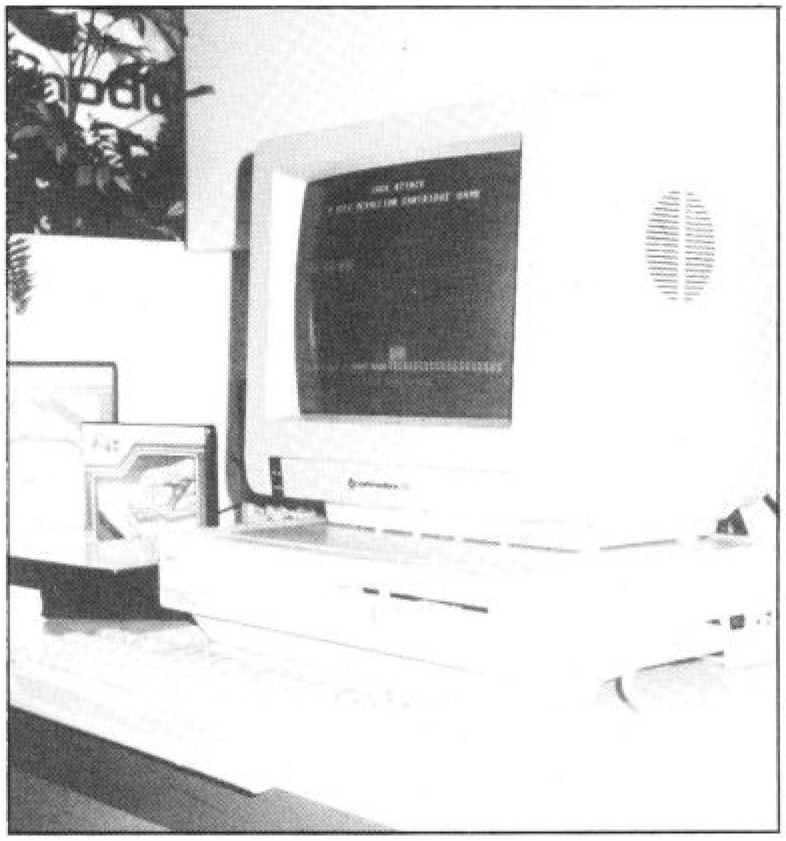
. . . And for the 16: Things are looking rosier for the much-maligned C-16. Duckworth's have announced no less than two new books for it: *Using the Commodore 16* (£9.95) and *The Complete Commodore 16 ROM Disassembly* (95p.), both by author and adventure writer Peter Gerrard. The former is more-or-less a Basic and simple machine-code tutorial for beginners complete with a few type-in programs, whilst the latter should satisfy the technical needs of the more sophisticated programmer. Duckworth's is on 01-485 3484.

128D Launched

At long last, the big-brother version of the 128 is available. Launched at the Which Computer Show in early January, the new 128D is a C-128 with built-in 1571 disk drive, monochrome monitor and the CP/M operating system. The whole lot will cost you £499 excluding VAT.

Although the 128D was a little overshadowed by the Amiga at the Show, it did display sufficient 128-dedicated business software to make it a particularly attractive machine for the small business. And that's exactly where Commodore expects it to sell.

Obviously that software was already available on the original 128; what Commodore's done is to design a machine that looks more businesslike — like a true personal computer, in fact.



between using micros for business or leisure — a mould the Atari ST and Commodore Amiga are already trying to break.

But will the 128D sell as well as Commodore hopes? It's major rival must be the Amstrad 128 and PCW 8256 machines, the latter offering computer, disk drive, monitor, printer and bundled software for £100 less.

The 128D is very sleek and good looking, the perfect machine for users who need a machine that 'looks' and performs to professional standards but who wouldn't turn their noses up at a few slick moves with Rock 'n' Wrestle.

Inevitably, the price will decide whether the 128D takes off or flops like the SX-64. You simply can't help asking, if Amstrad can do it, why can't Commodore?

Bohdan Buciak

Shaping up for business

So the 128D sports the conventional three-unit design: a detachable keyboard, a system box and a monitor perched on top.

Taking the system box first; that houses the 128's innards with the 1571 disk drive on the right. Power on/off and disk drive indicators appear on the front panel.

And all the 128 ports and sockets are duplicated faithfully. Two joystick ports and a reset switch are found in their usual position down the right side, together with the keyboard cable socket. Round the back there's cartridge and user ports, video and serial ports, TV and RGBI sockets. Thankfully Commodore didn't forget the cassette port, a crime they were guilty of on the SX64 portable.

Once again, the keyboard layout remains faithful to the original despite being detachable and much slimmer. There's an element of portability in the 128D in that the keyboard clips on to the bottom of the system box which has a handle built into the left side. So you can carry it around easily enough, but there's still the screen to contend with.

Commodore has opted for the 1900M monochrome monitor to bundle up with the machine, probably because the 1901 colour monitor would have taken the price above the crucial £500 barrier. You can get the 1901 instead, but you'll probably pay around £150 more for it. For users not bothered about colour, the 1900M will give both 40 and 80-column displays.

Go-faster drive

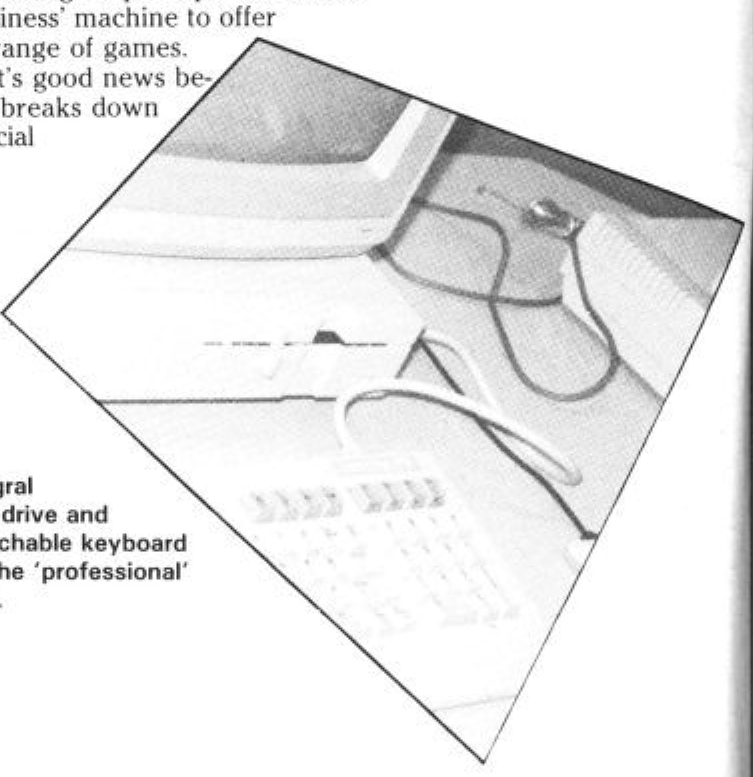
Probably the most exciting thing about the 128D is its built-in 1571 disk drive, a sleek double-sided drive that fits nicely into the low-profile system box. It has the capacity to run CP/M software around ten times faster than the sluggish 1541. Data storage capacity is also much increased: 410K formatted when in CP/M mode. That makes it a much more attractable proposition for users put off by the 1541's lousy performance.

Existing 128 owners, though, will be a little miffed by the 128D, since the 1571 drive is still not generally available as a separate peripheral. So far, they've had to make do with the ugly looking single-aided 1570 model.

Business bargain?

Despite using pretty old technology, the 128D is one of a new generation of micros that exploit the wealth of business software running under the CP/M operating system. Similar machines include the Amstrad 128 and PCW 8256.

Of course the 128D's other attraction is its 64 compatibility, making it perhaps the first 'business' machine to offer a huge range of games. And that's good news because it breaks down the artificial barrier



Integral disk drive and detachable keyboard for the 'professional' user.

• *High Street hi-fi giants, Laskys, has just announced that it is to sell the Commodore PC10 and 20 machines in its 30 largest shops.*

Commodore has reduced its price specially for the occasion. So the PC10 (dual 5.25 disk drives) comes in at £1,199, whilst the PC20 (20MB hard disk) is being priced at £1,799.

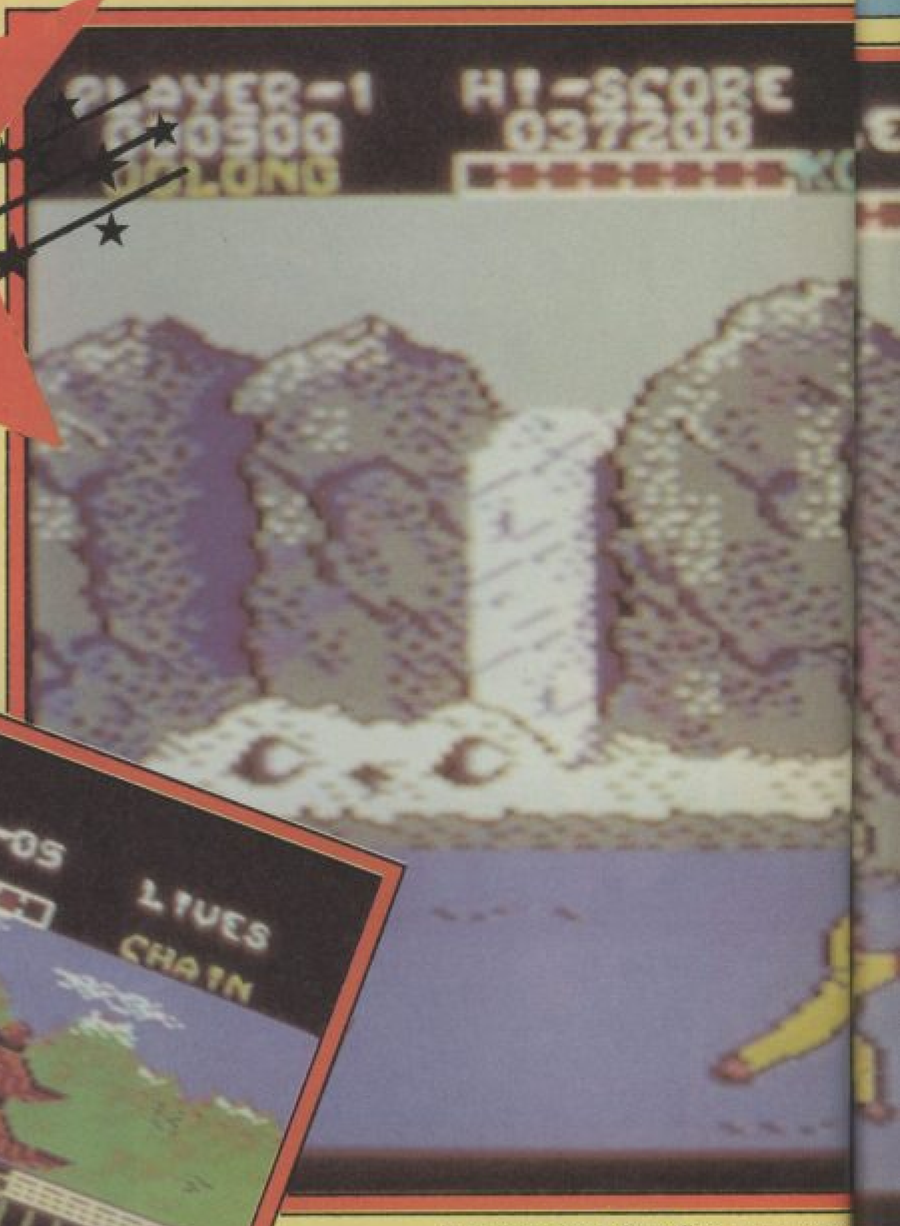
Colour versions of both models will cost around £400 extra. Laskys will also sell you software, add-ons and free installation through micro maintenance experts, Mills Associates.



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YIE AR KUNG FU
Commodore 64/128
Ocean
Price: £8.95/cass

Ocean's penultimate Konami release should have made it out for Christmas, but the out-of-house programmers in Scotland couldn't get their act together. The opposition can count themselves lucky — it would have cost them a lot of sales.



You take your first five opponents



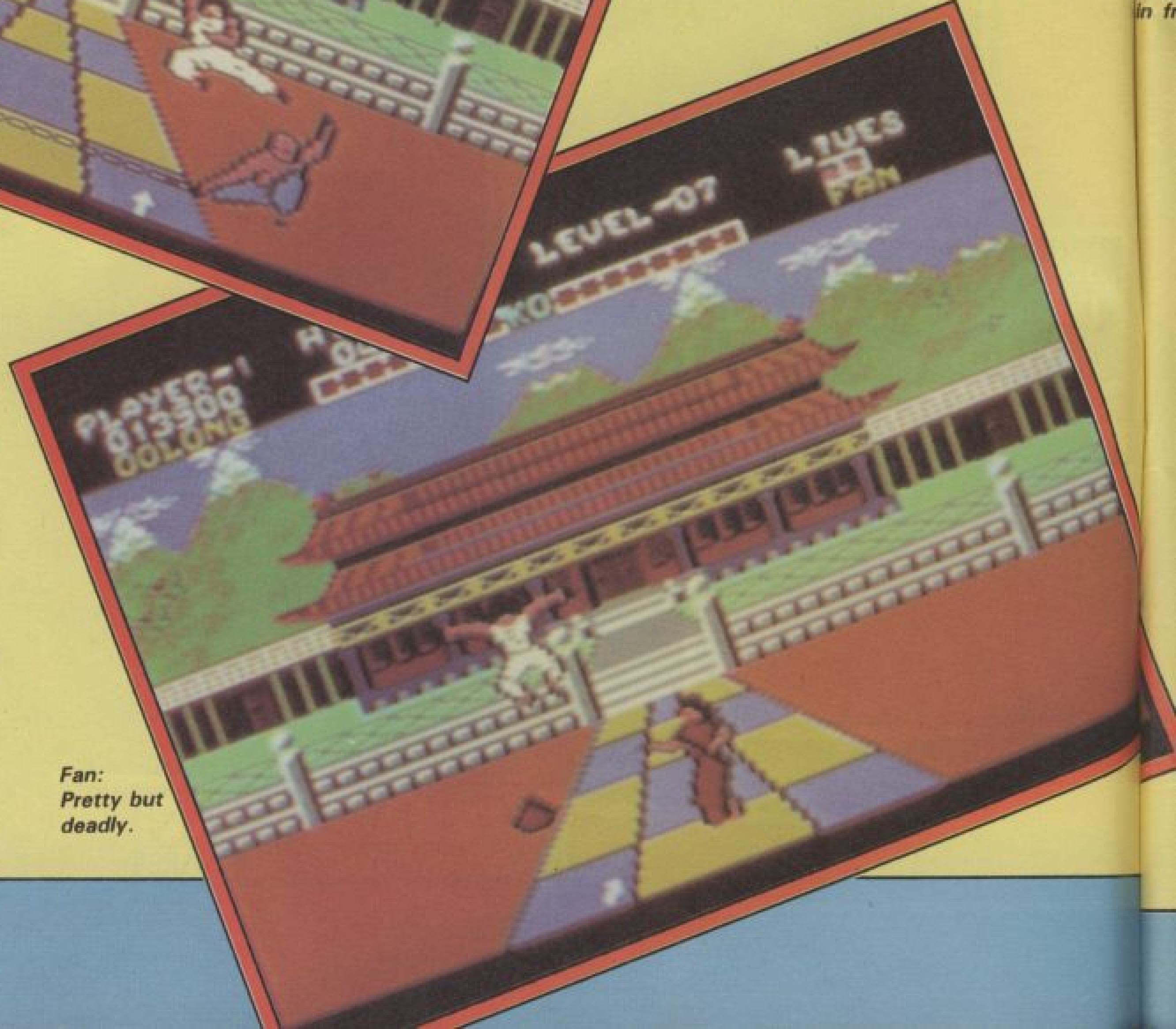
Chain: You'll have to be nimble to stay out of reach.

Dave 'Rambo' Collier stepped into the fray and knocked the game off, in a couple of months. It looks, though, as if it's had a year's care and attention lavished on it.

If you've never emptied your change into the original (where have you been?) it's a classic arcade struggle to fight your way through ten different and progressively deadly opponents in an attempt to become a Kung Fu Master.

The action takes place against two backdrops, a waterfall (cascading more impressively down a mountain than the piddly little one in *Winter Sports*) and a courtyard set before a mansion.

Controls are much like you'd expect them to be if you've played *Fist*. Sixteen moves in



Fan: Pretty but deadly.



front of the waterfall. This is Nuncha with the nasty rice flail.

two modes. Eight joystick positions to punch and manoeuvre and eight more with the fire button depressed for a crippling selection of blows. Each strike earns you points, the highest score being awarded for the flying kick.

The similarities to *Fist* end right there. If Melbourne House's game is the software equivalent of David Carradine's TV 'Kung Fu' then this is 'The Water Margin'. As Oolong, the hopeful young pretender, you'll be bouncing around the screen with phenomenal leaps and bounds tackling an array of eccentric opponents.

What really sets this apart from the mighty *Fist* and the other martial arts games is the speed of the thing. *Yie Ar Kung Fu* will give you a sore trigger finger and aching wrists. It's much faster than the Konami original. I know because the Ocean boys made me play their arcade machine. I can work my way to the end of the original but not on their conversion — not so far anyway.

I promise you as well that you won't want to rest until you've beaten the lot. It's not easy, even the programmers struggle at the final opponent. Add to this nine different sets of music from Martin Galway and you're looking at an impressive all round package.

There's no need to feel you've got to disregard this because you've got *Fist*. It stands up on its own. Slightly smaller figures (they're only three sprites high to Fist's four) are made up for by equally compulsive gameplay and brutal toughness.

Here we have a conversion that's even better than the arcade original. Now, where's the elastoplast. . .?

YOUR OPPONENTS.

BUCHU: Fat and stupid. More of a gentle introduction to set you up for what's coming next.

STAR: A hard woman this one. Not only is she a bit useful with the moves, but she throws those wicked looking kung fu stars.

NUNCHA: Flails viciously with the nunchaku rice flail. Hit and run.

POLE: Wields the ancient rod of Bo (wasn't she in 'Ten'?). If he traps you he'll pin you down. A change from the coin-op version.

CHAIN: The reach on this guy is a major problem. Timing your attacks is essential if you want to stay alive.

FAN: Deceptively deadly, Fan is pretty and cute as a tarantula on a birthday cake. Flings fans that do a lot of damage.

SWORD: This man's danger doesn't need much pointing out. Stay out of reach if you don't want to end up as nouvel cuisine.

TONFUN: Fights with flailing sticks. Is skilled and very fast.

BLUES: The big man himself. A Kung Fu Master in his own right. Your toughest opponent.

Mike Pattenden

Graphics	★★★★
Sound	★★★★
Toughness	★★★★★
Staying Power	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★

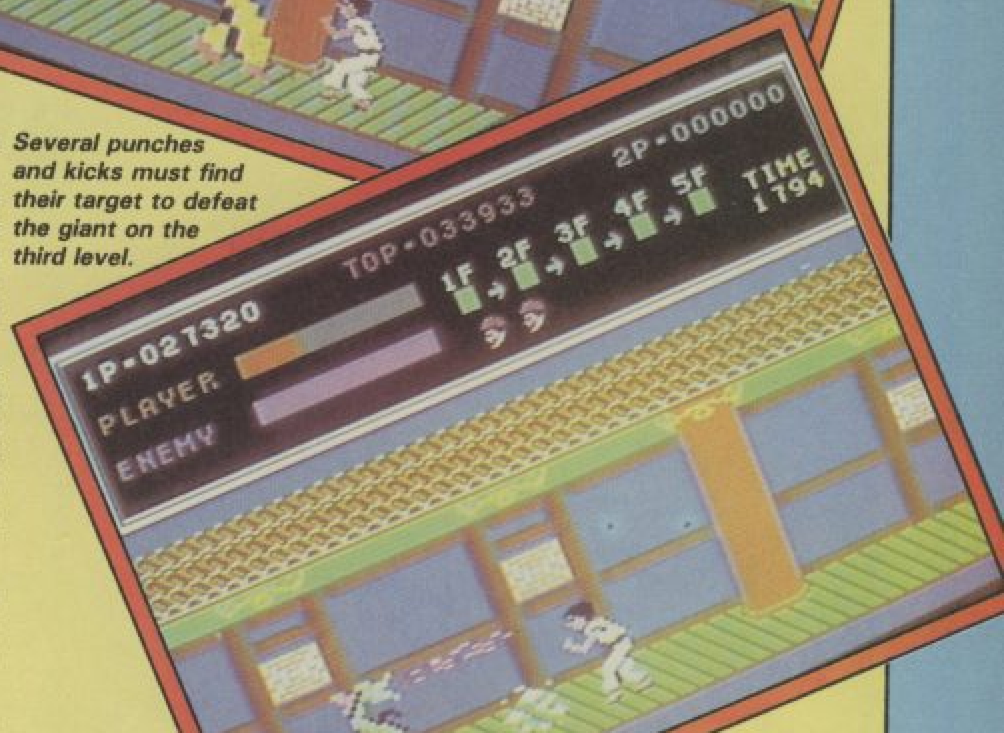
KUNG FU MASTER
Commodore 64
US Gold/Data East
Price: £14.95/disk £9.95/cass

The era of the combat game continues. This one, based on the coin-op of same name, makes no attempt to challenge in terms of graphics or animation. Instead the emphasis is on all-action gameplay. Pretty successful it is too.

The idea is to progress through five floors of a temple in a bid to rescue a beautiful captive maiden, yawn. Naturally the enemies become increasingly

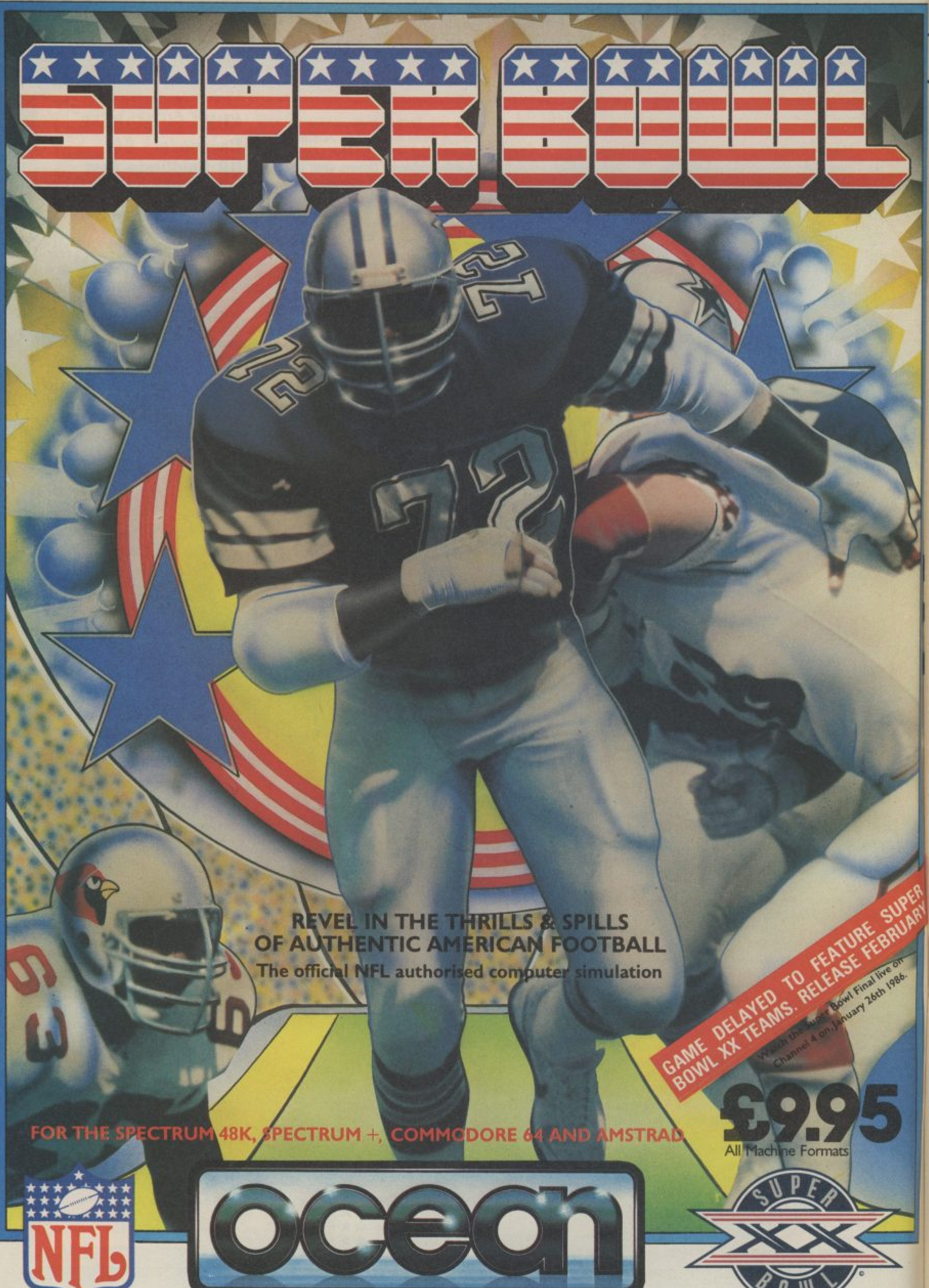
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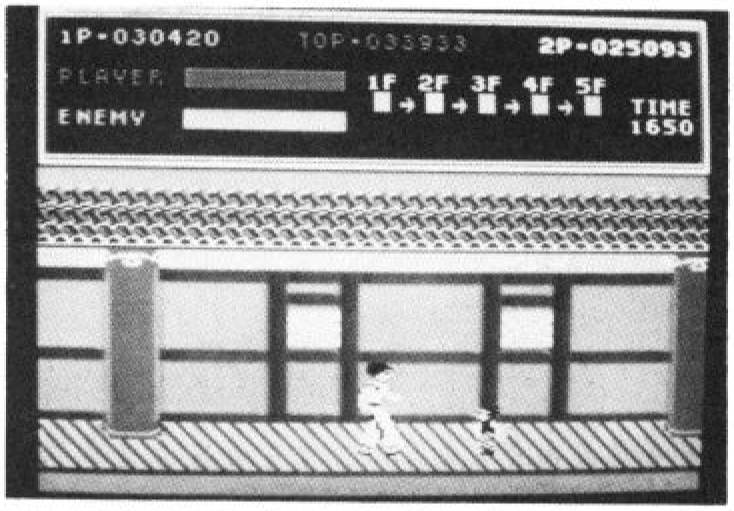


Several punches and kicks must find their target to defeat the giant on the third level.

Don't let the vases hit the ground or you get one of these dragons.



JANUARY 26, 1986
LOUISIANA SUPERDOME, NEW ORLEANS



How do you take on a dwarf?

continued from p.11

vicious and numerous on each floor. You have to destroy them all using an array of kicks and punches.

What makes the game different is not the range of attacking moves at your disposal — this is pretty limited — but rather the number and variety of the enemies arranged against you. Many of them are destroyed with just one or two kicks or punches and smashing your way through half a dozen in quick succession is somehow much more satisfying than the usual prolonged combat against an individual.

The range of baddies is formidable:

— **Henchmen** are the easiest. They approach you like zombies, and if you fail to knock them out with a single blow they will cling to you, sapping your energy.

— **Knife-Throwers** take two blows to be killed, and in the meantime you'd better duck or leap over the knives they throw.

— **Falling Vases** can be shattered with a single kick, but if you miss, they hit the ground and an indestructible snake crawls out.

— **Dragons** will emerge from falling balls unless you can hit the ball in the air.

— **Dwarves** can only be hit by a squat kick or punch. They have a nasty habit of somersaulting onto you.

— **Killer Bees** attack you at varying heights and must be despatched with an appropriate kick or punch.

— **Guardians.** There's just one of these on each floor guarding the stairs to the next.

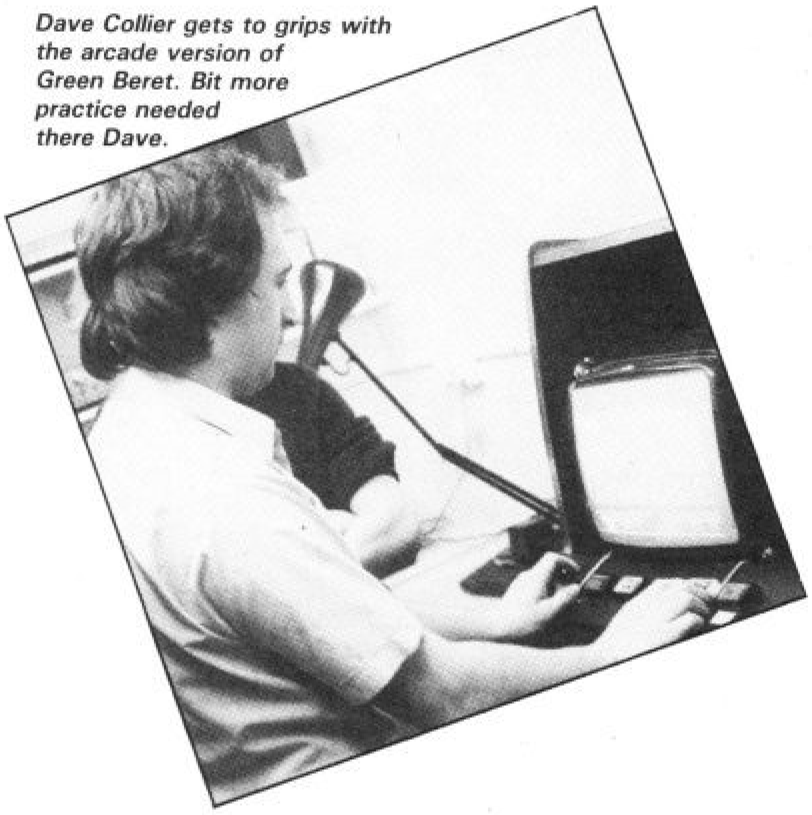
With all this going on it's not surprising that the graphics aren't sensational. The characters are all fairly small, and your hero hobbles along with a serious leg injury right from the start. The sound too is fairly rudimentary with not much more than a short rhythmic tune and the odd thwack sounding just a little like the sound tracks of most Kung Fu films.

Never mind, I enjoyed Kung Fu Master a good deal, and that's despite being a gentle and peace-loving person.

Chris Anderson

Graphics	★★★
Sound	★★★
Toughness	★★★★★
Staying Power	★★★★
Value	★★★★

Dave Collier gets to grips with the arcade version of Green Beret. Bit more practice needed there Dave.



KONAMI'S BARMY ARMY

I'm heading towards a pub called 'The Place Next Door' to shoot some pool with a large contingent of Ocean's programmers when Martin Galway takes a small diversion into an arcade. "You've got to see this, I can't stop playing it, it's great!" he enthuses.

The game in question is *Gauntlet* an Atari coin-op that allows potentially four players at once to get involved. "I've got an Amiga at home at the moment and I'm going to work out a way of doing this," he says enthusiastically.

"What", I wonder aloud "is coming next, though?" My question is answered back at Ocean after I've sampled the arcade versions of *Mikie* and *Yie Ar Kung Fu* in Martin's little sound studio.

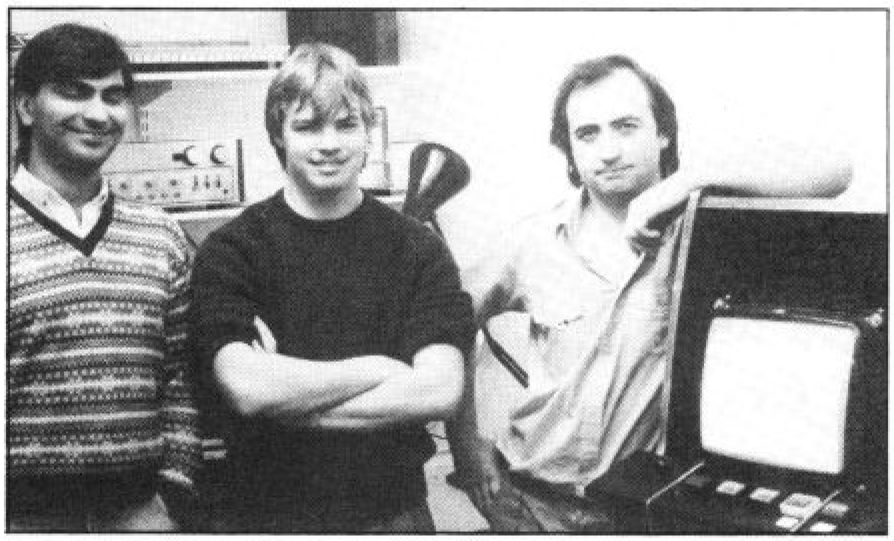
Dave Collier enters with a brown paper package, unwraps a circuit board and shoves it into the arcade machine that stands in the corner, its innards spewing everywhere.

A tap of the one player key and all is revealed. It's Konami's *Green Beret*. "We've signed up another deal," smiles Dave Collier. "I can't wait to get started."

In case you've never heard of *Green Beret*, it's a kind of rightwards scrolling *Commando*. To describe it like that though, is an insult to the game. It's much better than Capcom's effort.

The object is to rescue four prisoners who await a firing squad, tied to posts in a compound. You have to storm across the screens and free them before they get shot.

En route you encounter hordes of enemy troops. To begin with you're only armed with a knife, but later along the way you'll pick up a flamethrower, bazooka, and grenades.



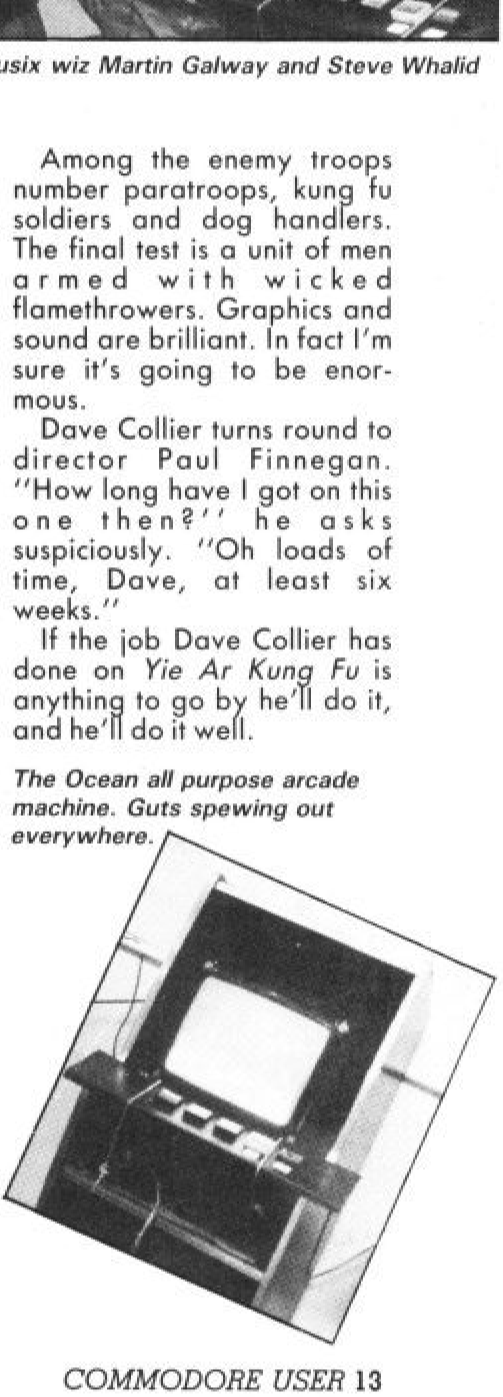
Programmer Dave Collier with musix wiz Martin Galway and Steve Whalid (left to right).

Among the enemy troops number paratroops, kung fu soldiers and dog handlers. The final test is a unit of men armed with wicked flamethrowers. Graphics and sound are brilliant. In fact I'm sure it's going to be enormous.

Dave Collier turns round to director Paul Finnegan. "How long have I got on this one then?" he asks suspiciously. "Oh loads of time, Dave, at least six weeks."

If the job Dave Collier has done on *Yie Ar Kung Fu* is anything to go by he'll do it, and he'll do it well.

The Ocean all purpose arcade machine. Guts spewing out everywhere.



Commodore 64 Chart

This chart is based on the MicroScope chart as compiled by Gallup.

GALLUP

MicroScope is the weekly trade paper of the microcomputer industry. If your computer store doesn't display the latest MicroScope chart, ask the manager to call Mark Salmon on 01-631 1433 — we'll send a copy every week.

Chart Chat

This month we bring you the only professionally compiled C16 chart around. All because the constant flood of letters we receive from you demanding one gave us no choice. And look who dominates the top six positions, Mastertronic!

Watch out for big changes soon. Expect Elite's *Commando* to shoot to the top and stay there for a long time.

Vindicated! Over on the 64 chart *Rambo* has knocked *Commando* off the top. And you doubted our word! Nice to see *Kane* our budget game of the month doing well already.

Watch out, though, for *Yie Ar Kung Fu*, set to explode on to the scene right now. Our other screen stars will do equally well and Ocean may well have a fight on their hands with Hewson's classic shoot 'em up, *Uridium*.

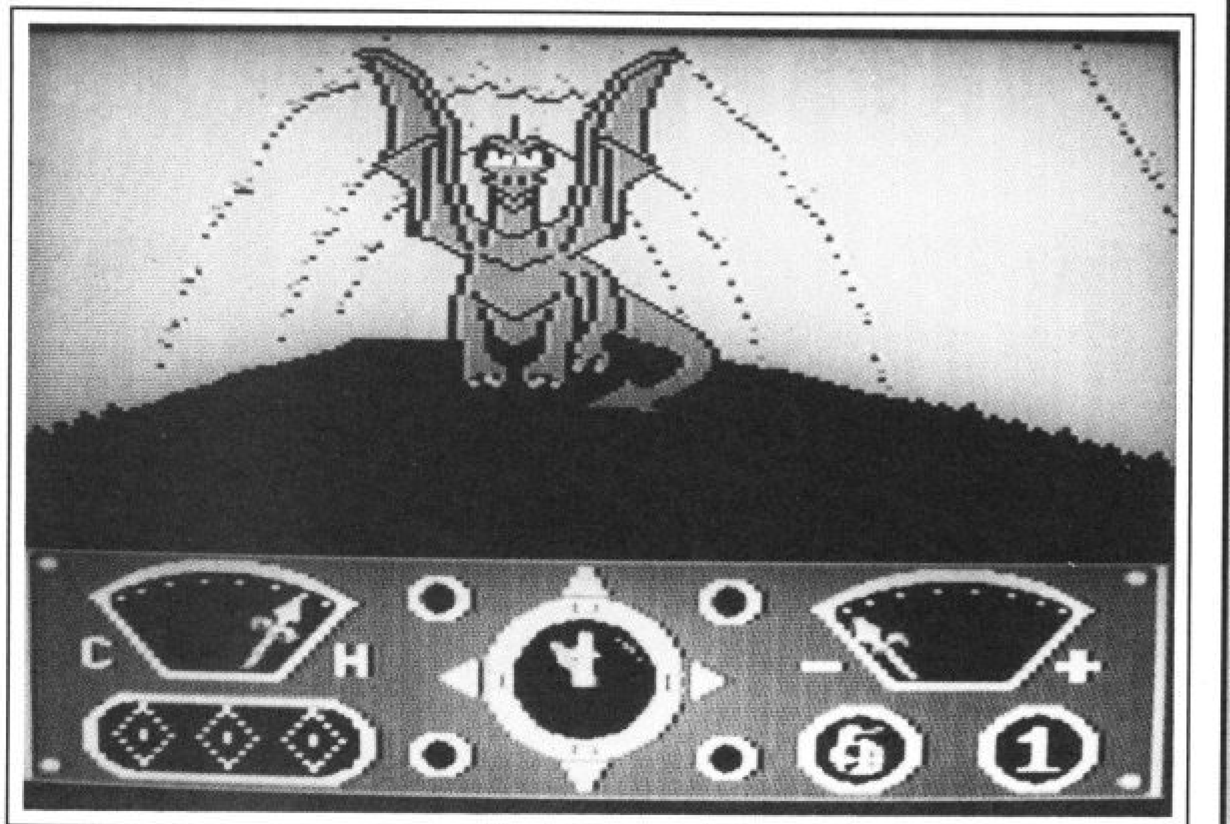
1	Rambo	Ocean
2	Commando	Elite
3	Winter Games	Epyx/US Gold
4	Last V8	Mastertronic
NEW	Koronis Rift	Activision
NEW	Rock 'N' Wrestle	Melbourne House
7	Mercenary	Novagen
NEW	Kane	Mastertronic
9	Little Computer People	Activision
10	Kik Start	Mastertronic
NEW	Bounder	Gremlin Graphics
12	They Sold a Million	Hit Squad
13	Summer Games II	Epyx/US Gold
14	Fight Night	US Gold
NEW	Now Games II	Virgin
16	Action Biker	Mastertronic
17	Arcade Hall of Fame	US Gold
18	Transformers	Ocean
19	Way of the Exploding Fist	Melbourne House
NEW	Goonies	Datasoft/US Gold

General C16

1	Commando	Elite
2	Yie Ar Kung Fu	Imagine
3	Rambo	Ocean
4	Winter Games	Epyx/US Gold
5	They Sold A Million	Hit Squad
6	Formula One Simulator	Mastertronic
7	Way of the Exploding Fist	Melbourne House
8	Computer Hits (10)	Beau Jolly
9	Action Biker	Mastertronic
10	BMX Racers	Mastertronic

1	Big Mac	Mastertronic
2	Tutti Frutti	Mastertronic
3	Formula One Simulator	Mastertronic
4	BMX Racers	Mastertronic
5	Rockman	Mastertronic
6	Squirm	Mastertronic
7	Kung Fu Kid	Gremlin Graphics
8	Vegas Jackpot	Mastertronic
9	Thai Boxing	Amco
10	Beach Head	Acces/US Gold

THE EIDOLON
Commodore 64/128
Activision
Price: £9.99



Oh dear, he doesn't look too pleased, better hop it.

Late one night on your way home you happen to pass by the eerie mansion of Dr. Joseph Agon, who happens to live in your neighbourhood. Being the careless type, he has left the front door wide open and you being the nosey type decide to take a butchers round his gaff.

In the living room, just behind the settee, you discover The Eidolon — a sort of space/time machine invented by Agon over a hundred years ago. Fortunately it was built to last and after tweaking a few knobs and levers you find yourself in a strange and mysterious world of cavernous mazes.

This is where the story ends and the game begins. Making your way around the labyrinth you must collect three jewels one red, one green, and one blue. Of course it's not just a case of pick them up and thankyou very much.

First you have to find them and there are a few problems there, namely trolls, rotoflies, puffer birds, etc. These little beasties complicate things by bumping into The Eidolon and draining it's energy reserves. If all the juice runs out you end up back in Dr. Agon's living room — i.e. game over.

The creatures can be thwarted by firing spheres of energy at them. These come in four colours (a very colourful game this) red, blue, green and gold, and can be found hovering around the maze.

Different coloured spheres have different powers. Blue ones give you more time by freezing The Eidolon's clock and gold spheres recharge your energy reserves. The green spheres have the power to transform one creature into another and red ones are essential for destroying the guardian of the jewel.

Once you have a jewel in your possession you must travel to the end of the cavern where you will find a statue of a dragon.

If you picked the right coloured gem the dragon springs to life and you must destroy it with a multi-coloured energy sphere cocktail.

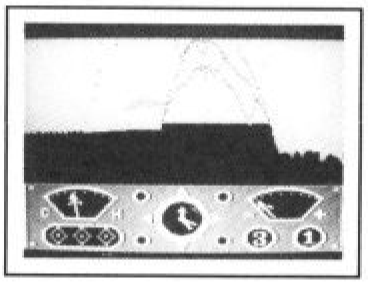
If Dr. Agon's diary is to be believed there are seven levels, beyond which lives a dragon of truly horrendous proportions.

What sets The Eidolon apart from the numerous other maze games around is the structure of the maze and the quality of the graphics.

The maze actually looks like an underground cavern rather than the familiar breezeblock structure. It's also possible to turn by degrees and move in any direction which certainly adds to the sense of realism.

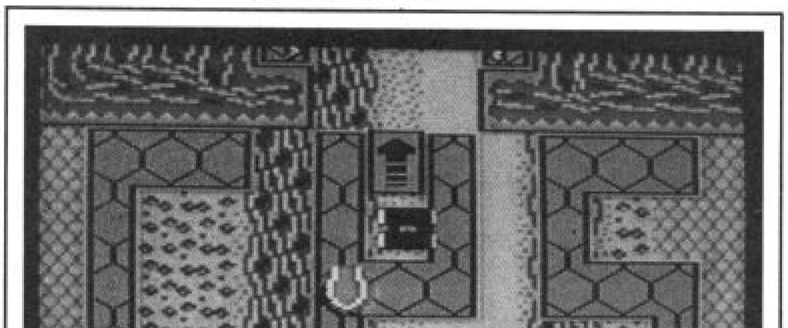
Ken McMahon

Graphics	★★★★★
Sound	★★★
Toughness	★★★★
Staying Power	★★★★
Value	★★★★



BOUNDER
Commodore 64/128
Gremlin Graphics
Price: £9.95/cass

Bounder — "infuratingly addictive".



Funny, this game comes to me with the firm recommendation of another magazine stamped on it. If I was less charitable I'd say . . . well it's a good job I am feeling charitable today.

And what a horrible game it is! No don't rush off, I mean that it's left me foaming at the mouth, chewing bits off the carpet and clutching clumps of hair. You can take it as read then, that this is infuriatingly addictive.

The idea is simple and as far as I know original. You guide a tennis ball hopscotch style over a series of platforms set high up above the ground. Missing a platform results in your ball disappearing over the edge and plummeting earthwards until you hit the ground cartoon-style with a little puff of dust.

Bouncing around the slabs isn't as simple as it sounds. An endless supply of meanies drift about and lurk in wait. Contact with most causes you to pop and lose a life. It really is as simple and beautiful as that.

It's all a case of trial and error of course. Each time you have to get a little further just to see if you can improve, just to see what's coming up as the screen scrolls lazily along.

Graphics are neat and colourful, and the scrolling is smooth and staggered giving you a sense of the depth of the canyon below you. And the tune just aggravates the whole feeling of irritation when you fail. And fail you will — many times!

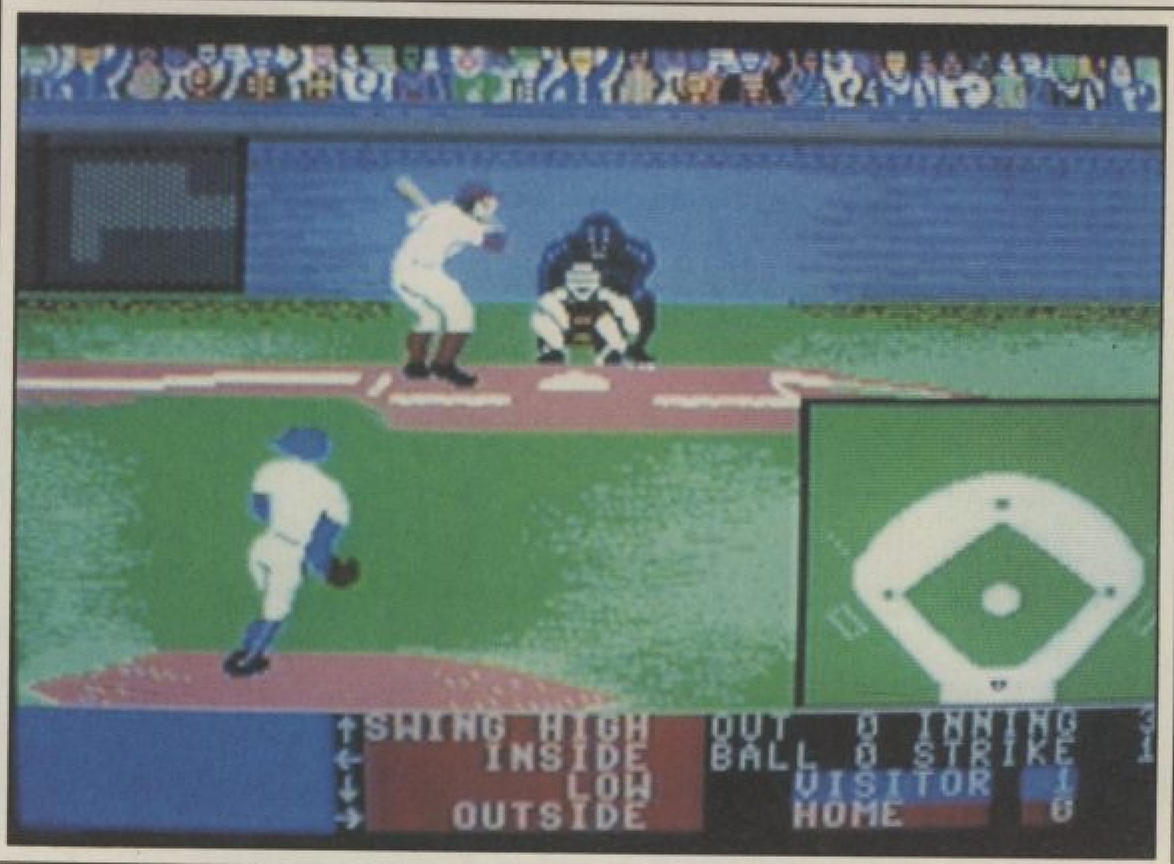
When you consider there's a useful little game on the other side of the tape (*Metabolis*) then this all adds up to a package well worth having. Besides which, who the hell needs an Amiga to

HARDBALL
Commodore 64
US Gold/Accolade
Price: £14.95/disk
£9.95/cass

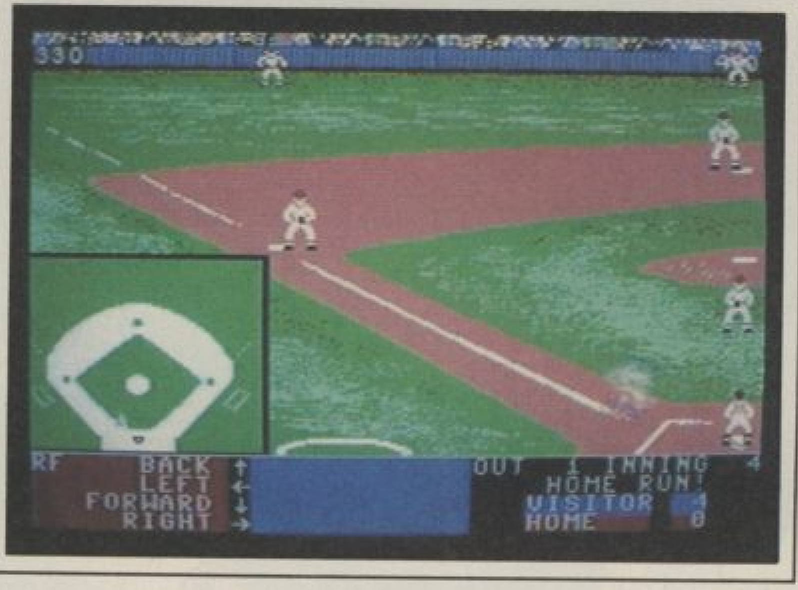
Oh boy, American sports fans are going to love this. Admittedly there are already three baseball simulations on the market, but this one makes the rest look prehistoric.

Somehow it manages to combine both the management and action aspects of the game without compromising either. Especially memorable is the animation of the pitcher and batter and the way that pitched deliveries are depicted.

The view for this key part of the game is from behind the pitcher. You see his back, while facing you is the batter and behind him the catcher and umpire. If your team is in the field you have to decide what kind of pitch to deliver and in which precise direction. There's a total of over 40 combinations, ranging from Fastballs to Sinkers, Sliders and Change-Ups.



Above. Lean back and take a swing.



Right. A flash of light bottom right as our star makes a home run.

What's remarkable is that each different pitch is depicted slightly differently on screen. For example, if you select a high Curveball which you want to swing away from a left-handed batter, that's exactly what you'll see happen. From the point of view of the pitcher the skill is to maintain a good variety and keep the batter guessing.

When you're batting the problem is to spot what type of delivery it is as early as possible so that you can respond accordingly. You have the option of swinging high, low, inside or outside by moving the joystick at the appropriate moment. But if you can see the ball is wide it's best not to swing at all — if you do and you miss a 'strike' is recorded against you. Three and you're out.

As in the real game, split-second reactions are the key. There is also a strong element of bluff, especially when you're taking on a human opponent instead of the computer.

If the batter connects, the view switches to the part of the field where the ball is moving. If you're fielding you can move the nearest fielder to the ball and then throw it to one of the 'bases'. The view immediately changes to the relevant base to give a close-up view of whether the ball or batter arrives first. This constant flicking between screens gives the impression of televised coverage and is very effective.

What isn't so effective is the way the ball moves when thrown by an outfielder. It starts incredibly slowly but then suddenly speeds up in a manner which would make Isaac Newton turn in his grave. A pity that, but it's about the only thing about this game that's shoddy.

If the action part of the game isn't enough for you, you can start getting involved in the management side — selecting a team, substituting players, fielding individual players in the most appropriate positions etc. Various statistics are supplied to help you make sensible choices.

Incidentally, if baseball is new to you, the program instructions do include a summary of the rules of the game. It's well worth getting into, and this program, without question, is the best way of doing so.

Chris Anderson

Graphics	★★★★★
Sound	★★★
Toughness	★★★★
Staying Power	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★



Bounder is like playing hopscotch on Mount Everest.

create a bouncing ball when you've got *Bounder?*

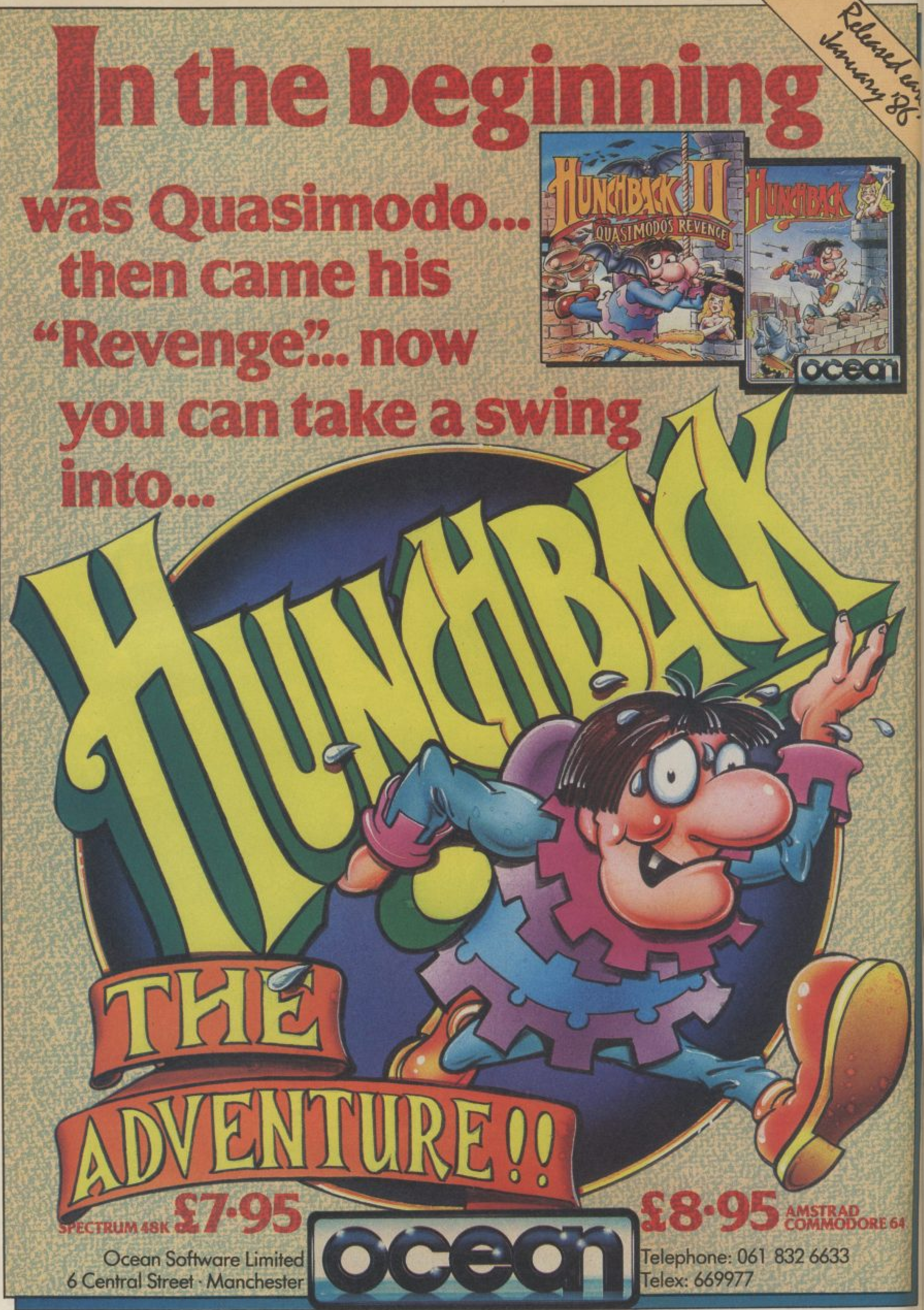
Mike Pattenden

Graphics	★★★★
Sound	★★★
Toughness	★★★★
Staying Power	★★★★
Value	★★★

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an't beat 'em!


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DRAGON SKULLE
Commodore 64/128
Ultimate/US Gold
Price: £9.95

Sir Arthur (yawn) Pendragon is at it again. After battling the nasties in *Staff of Karnath*, journeying to Egypt in *Entombed*, and sailing the high seas in *Blackwyche* until — undaunted — he arrives on a hostile island, home of the evil Skull of Souls.

Ultimate have been dragging out this tale a bit too long. I can't be the only person who has become less than enthralled by the latest instalments in the continuing saga of Arthur Pendragon.

Rather like a once-good soap opera that has gone off the boil Pendragon games arrive with dreary regularity. Please Ultimate let it end now.

Part four of the saga does actually offer a new game play mechanism — icons. These picture symbols are used by Sir Arthur to select certain tools, like the magic cloak and shovel.

In order to select these tools you have to move a finger pointer on screen by pressing the space bar. This means you have to sit quite near the 64 when playing the game — not too comfortable for this type of drawn-out arcade adventure.

I'll give you a tip to get you into the game as the first puzzle is fustratingly unintelligent. What you have to do to get beyond the skull guarding the entrance to the underground complex is walk to the left until you can touch the star fish on the ground. This lifts the skull to let you enter.

It's now icon time as you select your 'Magical Orb'. This is actually your nasty-zapper — and there are plenty of them too, as you would expect from Ultimate. These take the shape of Jumping Eyeballs, Wasps, Devils, Warriro Ants, Skull Bats, Salamander Archers and Dragons Eggs.

Your first major hurdle is a fire spitting Dragon who is belching flames at you from across a bridge. Several direct hits are required before this beast disintegrates so that you can pass.

A nice early shoot 'em up this — which boded well for the rest of the game.

The enjoyment was not sustained for long though when, soon after — I arrived at an apparently insurmountable obstacle. Another bridge — with four scrolling screens to the left, and to the right — both ending in dead ends. You have to get across that bridge. To do this you have to shift the skull blocking your path and — just one more tip, you can blast away at the nasties until the cows come home and the skull will still be there.

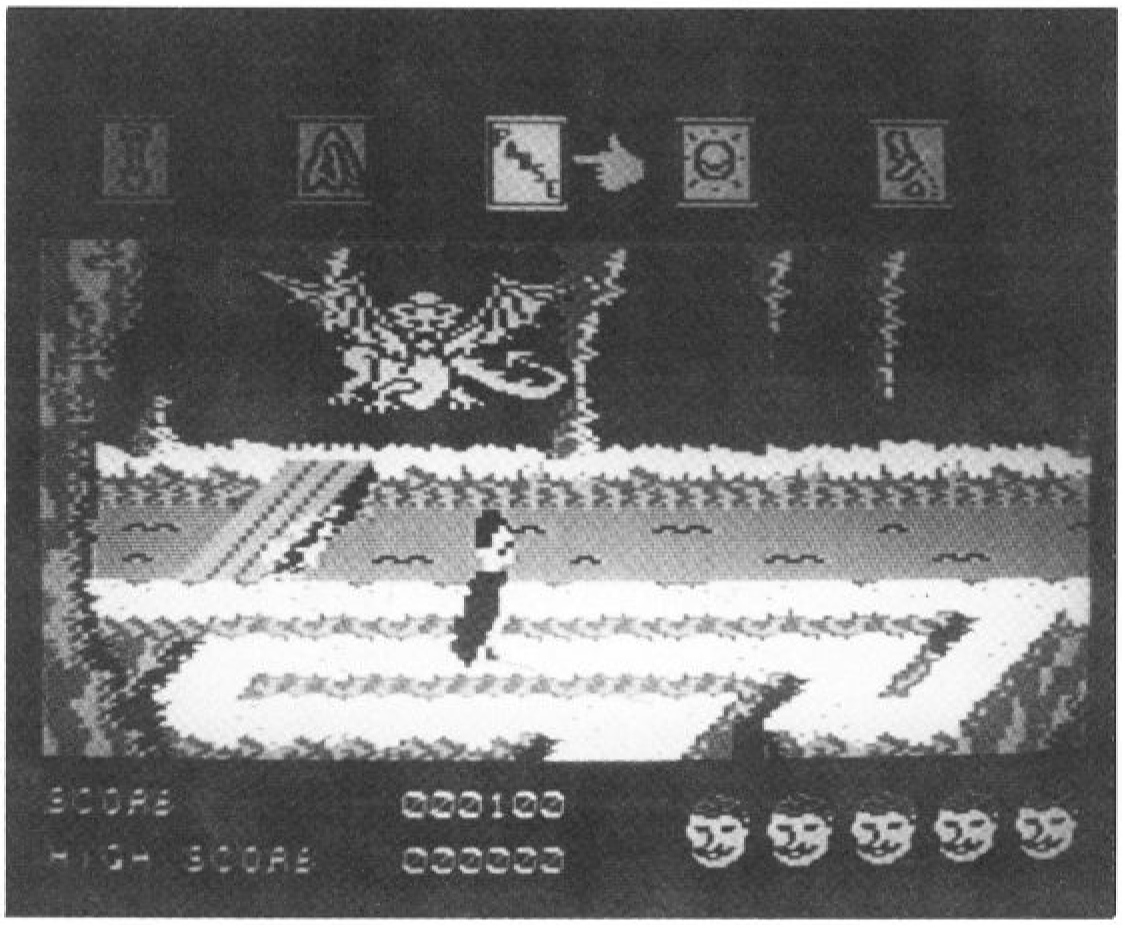
What you have to do is shoot the fierce native who is lobbing spears at you from the other side of the bridge — not once but eight times. To do this you can use the usual trick of dodging off and then back onto the screen to ensure that he will always be in the same place.

The shovel comes in handy and is worth finding as soon as you start the game. You can use it to dig up the graves scattered around the play area to win extra lives. Caution needs to be employed here though as you might just dig up a ghost.

There are plenty of these hair-wrenching puzzles in Dragon Skulle and certainly the game is the toughest of the Pendragon series. Apart from its toughness it loses out by comparison with some of its predecessors. The graphics are not as pretty as *Entombed* and *Blackwyche* and you would have thought by now, that Ultimate would have done something about the appalling animation of Sir Arthur. If anything it's worse than ever in this episode.

I can't recommend this game. The challenge is a tough one but very uniteresting. A disappointing conclusion to what was a very good series of games. Best Pendragon game is still *Blackwyche*.

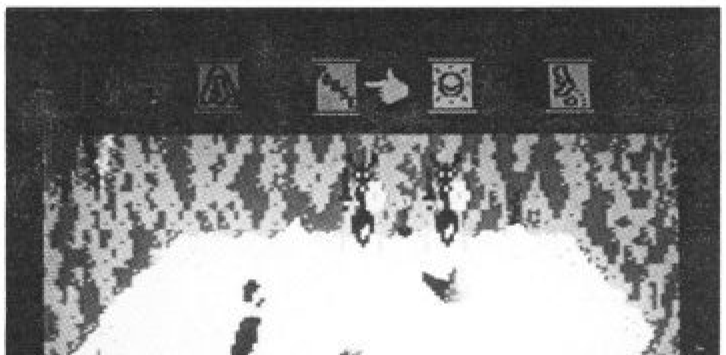
Eugene Lacey



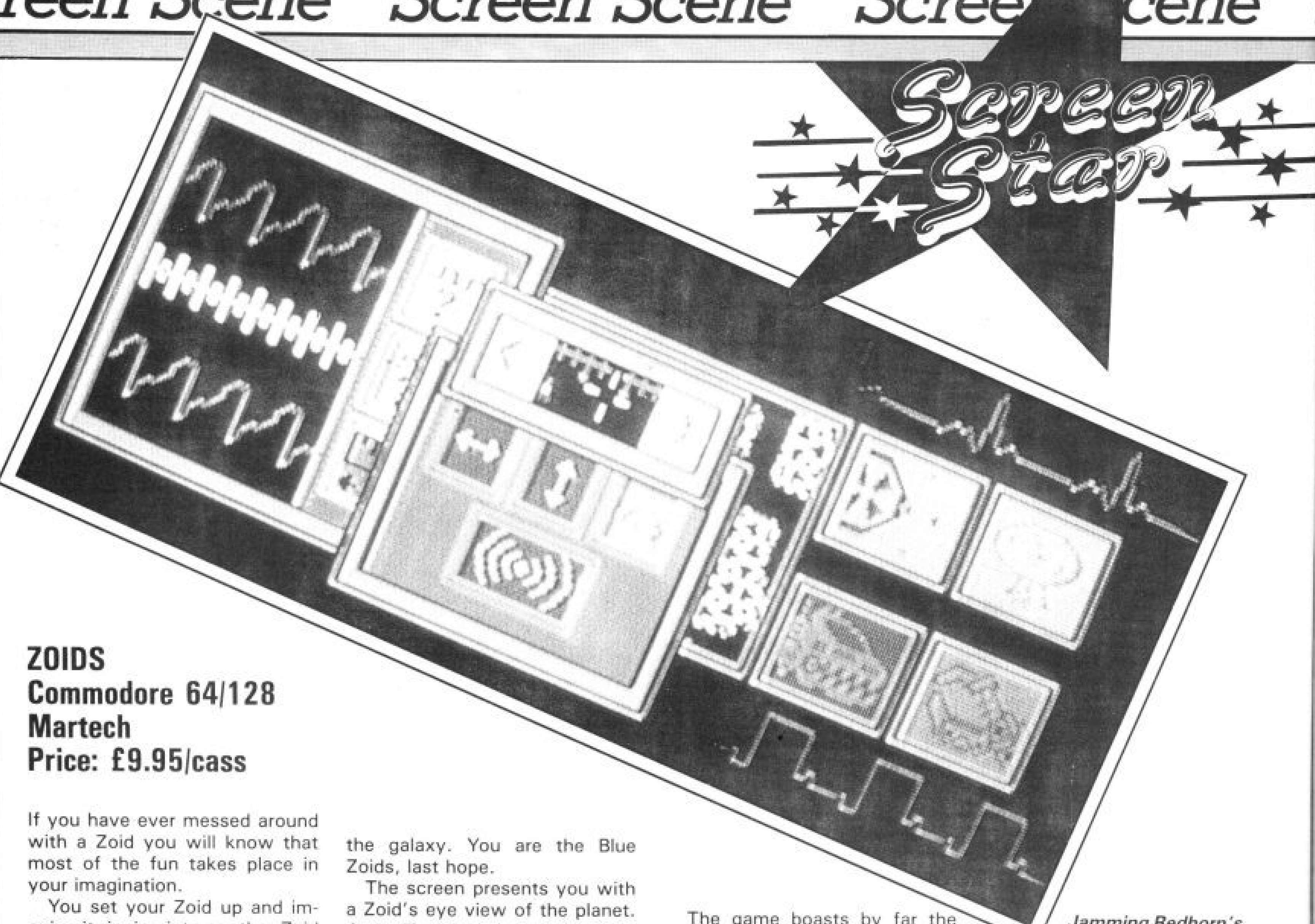
Graphics	★★
Sound	★
Toughness	★★★
Staying Power	★★
Value	★

Above: The Dragon blocks your path and requires several direct hits to kill.

Below: To get the shovel fire a Magical Orb at it.



Screen Star



Jamming Redhorn's missiles.

ZOIDS
Commodore 64/128
Martech
Price: £9.95/cass

If you have ever messed around with a Zoid you will know that most of the fun takes place in your imagination.

You set your Zoid up and imagine it ripping into another Zoid — perhaps holding it aloft and making screeching noises as you do so. Vivid pictures are conjured up of the Zoids tearing at each other — like the fight scenes in those dinosaur films.

Twenty seven year olds like me used to do similar things with our Action Man dolls way back in Pre-Zoidic times.

I know, I know, you are too old for either Zoids or Action Man but all I am trying to say is that it needs to be a damn good game, or damn good anything for that matter, to compete with the images created by your imagination. Which is probably why films of the book usually disappoint.

But let me say right away that Martech have achieved that difficult task with flying colours in Zoids — the computer game.

ZOID WARS

The action takes place on the planet Zoidstar where, after the collapse of a mighty Zoid empire, the Zoids turn on each other as supplies of Zoidar fuel began to disappear.

Without repeating too much Zoid history there are basically two types: Red ones — led by Redhorn the Terrible — and the Blue Ones led by, you guessed it, your good self.

Once Redhorn has defeated all the blue Zoids and captured their cities he intends to re-conquer the galaxy. You are the Blue Zoids, last hope.

The screen presents you with a Zoid's eye view of the planet. A scrolling map shows you a tiny fraction of the planet at any one time as you slowly explore it, seeking out Red Zoids, their cities, power installations, and communications centres.

Before you can goad Redhorn into battle you must first rebuild the Mighty Zoidzilla — who you will then take into battle.

Eight pieces of this mighty Zoid are hidden in certain Zoidstar cities. Your information scanners tell you the likelihood of a piece of the Zoid being present in percentage terms.

Using the information scanners is an essential part of the game because if you wander around attacking cities willy nilly then you will be set upon by hordes of Spinebacks and Trooper zoids.

Zoidstar is a pretty huge planet and you would be wise to make a map.

All of the cities are in contact with one another and they are monitoring your movements and passing this information around.

If you do decide to attack a city it is therefore wise to take out its communications tower first.

But this alone is no guarantee of keeping your conquest secret as Hellrunner's are dispatched as soon as a city is attacked, and there is also constant movement of Slither's around the planet. As well as transporting materials, Slithers carry information between cities.

The game boasts by far the best use of icons (picture symbols) and windows ever seen on a 64 game. An expensive piece of business software running on Amiga or a Macintosh is the nearest comparison for these graphics — only the business software would not be nearly as much fun.

It will take you quite a while to master all the icons and their uses. There is the jamming system, for example, that can be used to jam Redhorn's sonic or thermal missiles. To do this you first of all have to position your on-screen pointer over the jamming icon, press fire to make the jamming window unfold, and then match your waves to the missiles waves as closely as possible.

It is learning the sequence of selection that is the difficult bit. Well part of the difficult bit — because jamming, and the successful use of missiles is pretty tricky too.

But don't worry about these two devices for the time being — you only really need them for destroying cities and taking on really powerful Zoids.

RAIL GUN

Beginners can get a great deal of fun out of exploring the planet and attacking weaker Zoids with your Rail Gun. This is a good old shoot 'em up screen where you wrestle to get a Zoid in your sights, score a good few direct hits, and watch it go up like a pile of fireworks.

The good thing about the icons is that they are not just useless frills but they serve a purpose — of getting you quickly into the required piece of animated action.

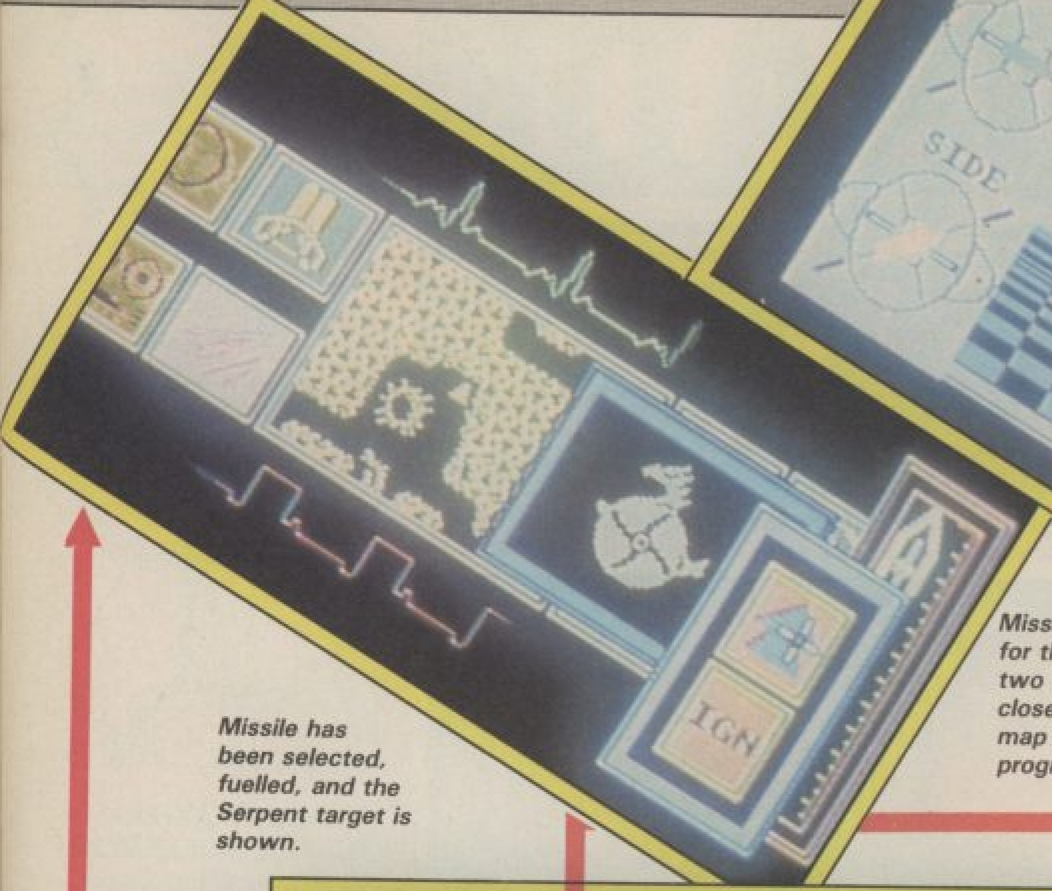
All the time you are playing the game you are presented with messages. For example as you approach a city a window opens to inform you that "Six Spinebacks approaching to defend city". That is your signal to reach for your missiles.

There are several different types of Zoids — and you will need to learn their relative strengths as quickly as you can so that you can decide when to turn to run and when to fight.

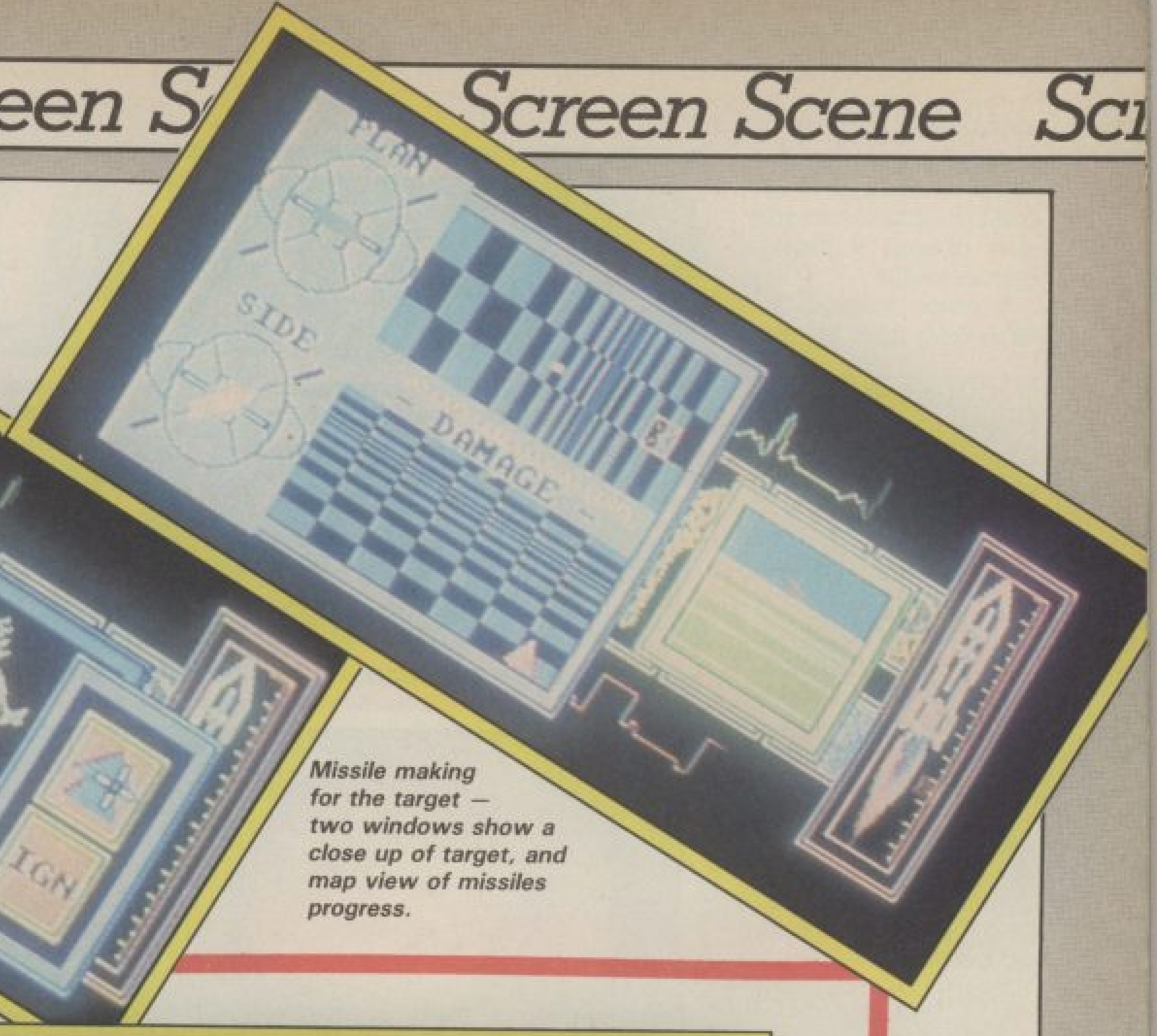
Get the impression I like this game? You bet I do. It has everything — great action screens, strategy, music by Rob Hubbard (he of the *Last V8, Commando, Monty on the Run,* and *Master of Magic)* and *graphics which . . . well just look at the screen shots.*

Eugene Lacey

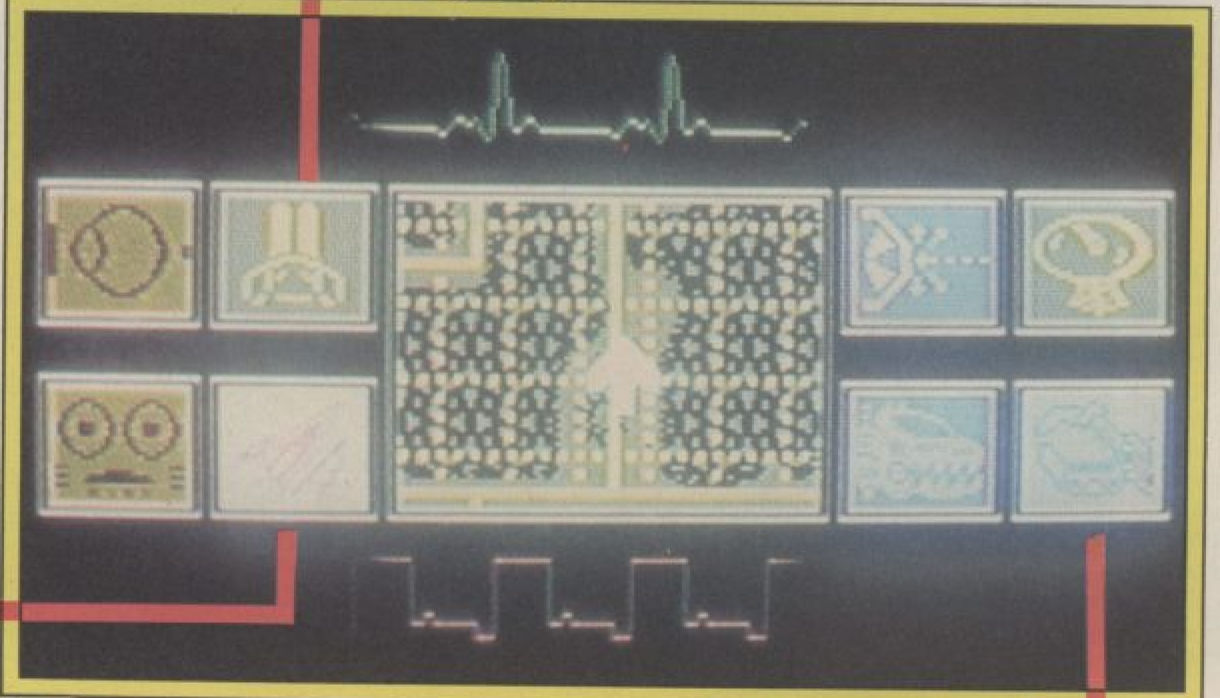
Graphics	★★★★
Sound	★★★★★
Toughness	★★★★
Staying Power	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★



Missile has been selected, fuelled, and the Serpent target is shown.



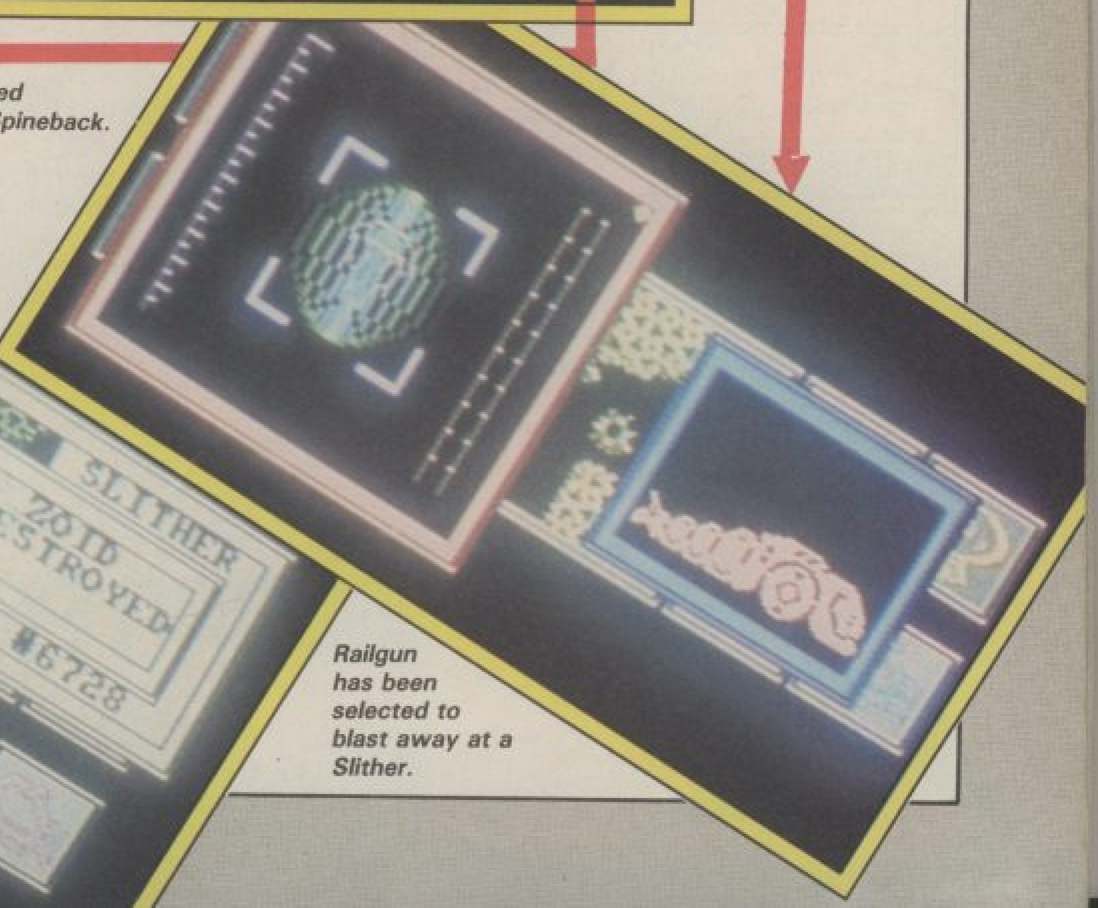
Missile making for the target — two windows show a close up of target, and map view of missiles progress.



Your Zoid's main controls showing primary function icons with your heart beat below, and Zoid pulse beat above.



Mine has been selected and used successfully to destroy a Spineback.



Railgun has been selected to blast away at a Slither.

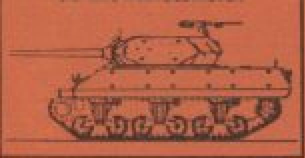
CRUSADE IN EUROPE

Are you a great strategist? Now you can find out by stepping into the thrill and excitement of some of history's greatest events!

"Crusade in Europe" from Micro-Prose takes you there

CODE DAY CARD	
DAY	CODE RESPONSE
3	GOODWOOD

U.S. M10 TANK DESTROYER



– from D-Day, to the "Battle of the Bulge", and provides challenge and excitement in a historically accurate and easy to play strategic simulation. And, best of all, you'll be in the thick of the action in minutes, even if you have never played a strategic simulation before!

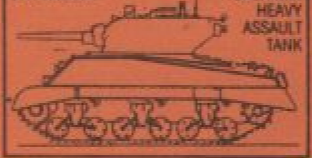
To play "Crusade in Europe"



requires both careful strategic thinking and fast responses to rapidly changing battlefield conditions. These simulations occur in accelerated real time, with action taking place continuously – just like real battles! No slow plodding action here! These outstanding simulations feature colourful animated graphics, great sound

CODE DAY CARD	
DAY	CODE RESPONSE
4	BOLERO

U.S. M4A3E2 SHERMAN HEAVY ASSAULT TANK





effects, and a new, quick and easy-to-use command system to enter commands using a joystick or the keyboard. "Crusade in Europe" allows solo play from either side's perspective or exciting direct competition between two opposing Generals. The computer handles all the rules, provides play balancing, and even the ability to change sides in the middle of the game! Other features include multiple scenarios from a single screen mission to an in-depth campaign using a ten-screen scrolling map, strategic maps, game save, and a unique "flashback" function.

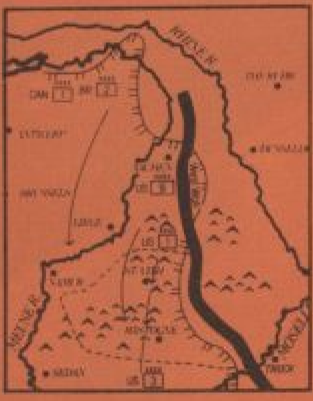
D-DAY & THE NORMANDY CAMPAIGN

In 1944, the war in Europe hung in the balance. In the East, the Germans were struggling to hold back the Soviet juggernaut. In the South, the Western Allies had conquered North Africa and Sicily, and their armies were slowly advancing up the Italian peninsula.

In the crucial Western theatre a blow had yet to be struck. Until the Allied armies crossed the English Channel and defeated the Germans in France, the outcome of the war could not be guaranteed.

On the morning of June 6th 1944, German sentries manning the "Atlantic Wall" gaped in awe as the greatest armada ever assembled appeared through the morning mists. D-Day had begun.

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"A BRIDGE TOO FAR" – THE BATTLE OF ARNHEM

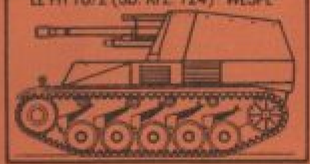
"Operation Market Garden" – Montgomery's audacious airborne offensive. Will it be successful or would a more direct route cost less in casualties and time?

"THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE"

An 'all or nothing' last desperate counter attack by Hitlers last legions. Will the

CODE DAY CARD	
DAY	CODE RESPONSE
9	DAVID

LE FH 18/2 (SD. KFZ. 124) "WESPE"



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The phone lines have been buzzing around Farringdon over the last few weeks as The Commodore User team have been phoning in to listen to Mike — Hot Shots — Pattenden introducing our exciting Dial 'N Listen Prize line.

There are super prizes to be won in the first ever computer games phone-in competition.

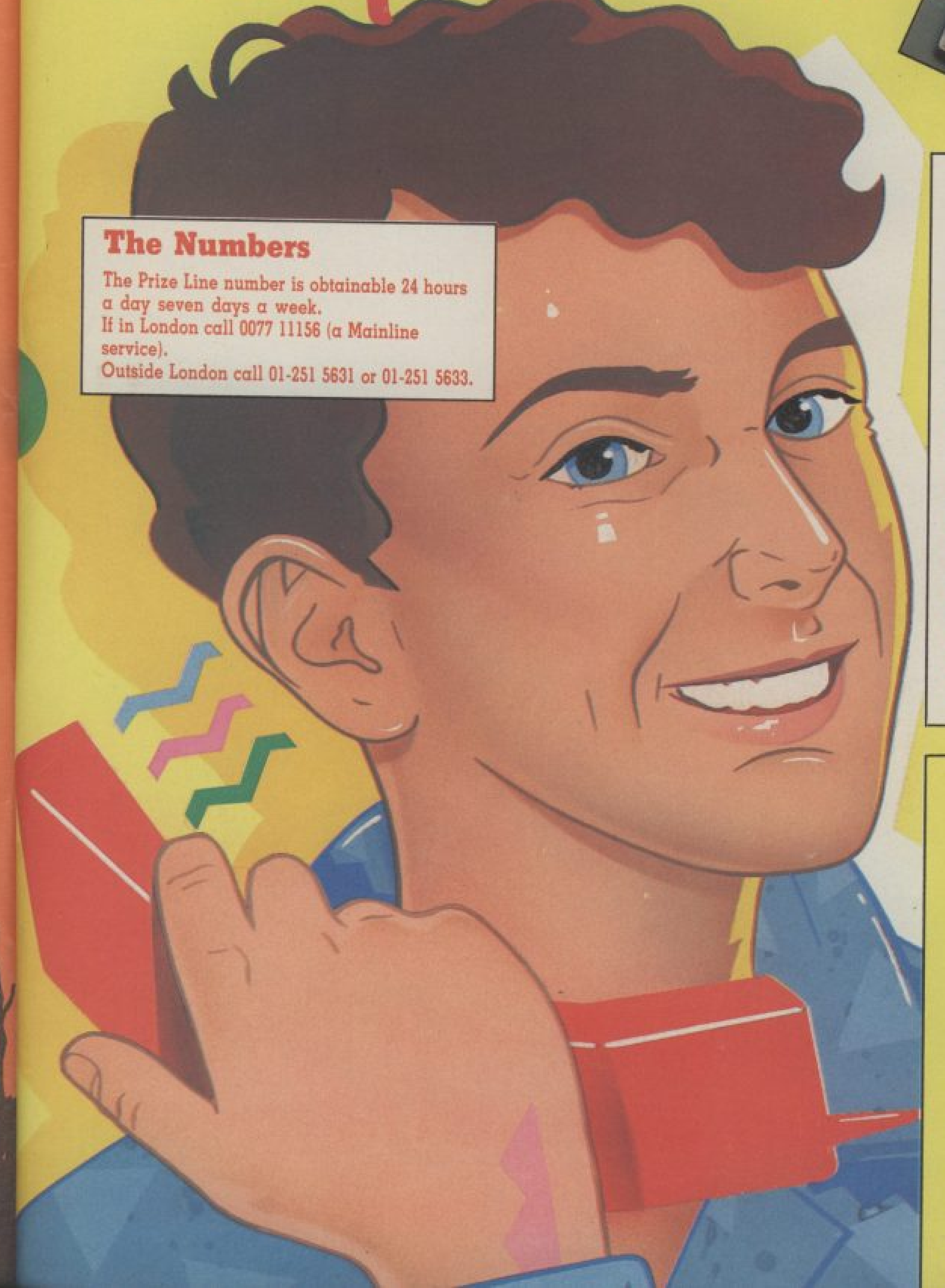
The quality of the sound tracks on C64 games has rocketed in recent months with experts like Ocean's Martin Gallway (Hypersports, Transformers) Rob Hubbard (Zoids, Master of Magic, Last V8) churning out unbelievable sounds at great speed.

To celebrate this new development in gaming we have recorded five of what we think are the best soundtracks around at the moment.

If you can name the games on the Prize Line fill in the form below as quickly as possible and send it off to Commodore User, Prize Line, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Entries must include the coupon below and reach our office no later than March 20 1986. You could be on to a super prize.

GAMES-LINE Competition





The Numbers

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If in London call 0077 11156 (a Mainline service).
Outside London call 01-251 5631 or 01-251 5633.

The prizes

First Prize

Our lucky winner will receive a British Telecom/Merlin Hawk portable telephone. The Hawk is slim, lightweight, and will work anywhere around the house and outdoors as well as up to a range of several hundred yards. The lucky winner will also receive this month's two Screen Stars — *Uridium* and *Zoids*, plus *Rock 'N Wrestle* and a Commodore User T-shirt.

Second Prize

Ten second prizes of a free one-year subscription to your favourite magazine — Commodore User.

Third Prize

Thirty third prizes of the excellent new game from Melbourne House — *Rock 'N Wrestle*. This wrestling simulation comes from the same team that programmed *Exploding Fist* and offers a multitude of moves. It's bone crushingly good.

Name ....

Address ....

....

....

....

....

Game 1 ....

Game 2 ....

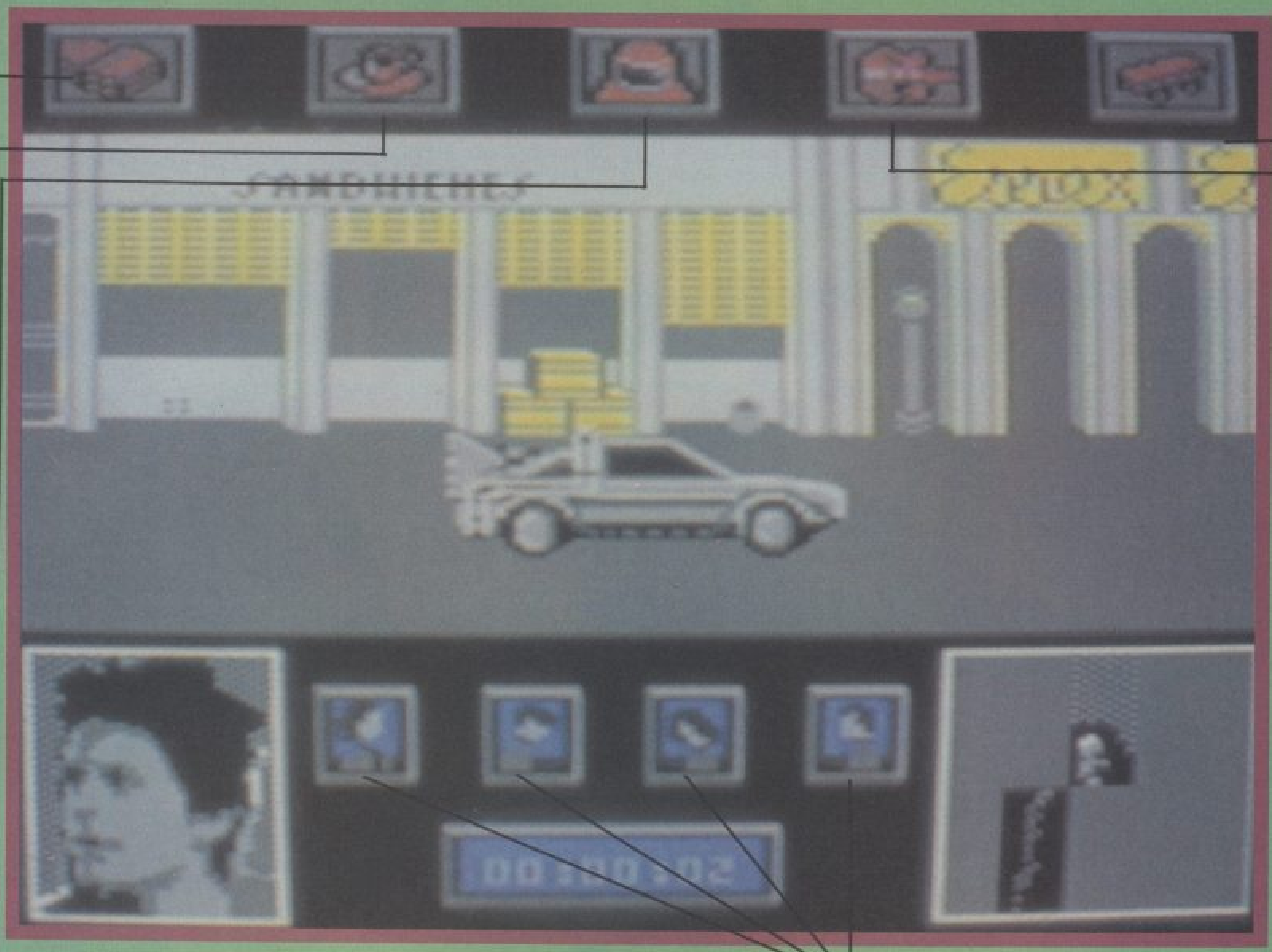
Game 3 ....

Game 4 ....

Game 5 ....

Now tell us who you would most like to phone you up and why. Do not use more than 100 words. You may use a separate sheet of paper for this part of the quiz.

 Screen Scene Screen Scene



1 Space Helmet brings George under your influence.

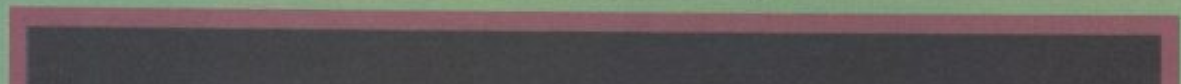
2 Cup of coffee — freezes George and the bully.

3 Book of love poems — read these to Lorraine.

4 People icons go green when you are influencing them.

5 Guitar will make Lorraine stand still.

6 Skateboard gives you the speed you need to make things happen at the right time.



BACK TO THE FUTURE
Commodore 64/128
Electric Dreams
Price: £7.95/disk

Back to the Future is like playing one of those games with the tiny ball bearings in a little glass container — just when you think you are about to get your last ball bearing in place one of the other ones rolls off its position and you have to start again.

Back to the Future is very similar as you have to try and keep all the characters in the same place for long enough to get them to do what you want them to do — in this case, fall in love.

For that one reader who hasn't seen the film yet (this is for you, Mum) it goes like this. You are Marty, cute American teenager who travels back in time to the year 1955 in the 'Doc's 'time machine.

When you get there you find yourself at the same high school as your Mom and Pop — great you might think. Trouble is your Mum takes a fancy to you and isn't at all keen on your future father.

Its down to you to play cupid and get them to fall in love. If you fail you might never be born.

First impressions of the game are not too favourable. It would be easy to form the opinion that the game is just another third rate film game which is definitely not the case.

Once you get the hang of it you become completely hooked and determined to pair your Mum and Dad off and escape back to the future in the nuclear powered DeLorean.

Apart from you and your parents there are two other characters in the game — Biff the bully, who will punch you any chance he gets and generally spoil your plans, and the Doc — who can help you by getting rid of Biff.

Marty is controlled by a combination of joystick control and icon (picture symbol) selection.

Marty walks left, right and forward through doors by simply moving the joystick in the required direction. He can move faster by selecting the skate board when its symbol flashes yellow.

There are four other icons that come in handy. The coffee cup can be used to freeze Biff for a useful half minute, the space suit makes your Dad (George) follow you, and the guitar will freeze your Mum (Lorraine).

Once you have George and Lorraine in one place you can go to the library and select the volume of love poems which, when taken back to where your Mum and Dad are, will get them feeling a bit more affectionately towards each other.

There are also two pictures in the screen shot above. These are made up of eight strips each. When you are doing well the pictures begin to fill in, but if you start to lose control the strips peel back again.

In order to make your escape back to the future you will have to fill in both pictures, then race back to the Doc's room, enter, come out again into the street where the car is waiting and hop in. The rest the program does for you.

There is also a musical reward for success. If you do well, the theme from the film — The Power of Love — begins to play, but if you lose control again, the 64 starts bashing out a very fast rendition of Johnny Be Good.

The acid test has to be — does it stand up without the film? I have no doubt that the answer is yes.

It really is fun, and difficult, to keep all the characters under control. You need lots of different icons to affect the behaviour of each character and each icon — once selected and used — will only last for a short time. This means that the game is a race against time. A bit like one of those circus acts with the plates spinning on the poles — with the guy racing around trying to keep them all spinning.

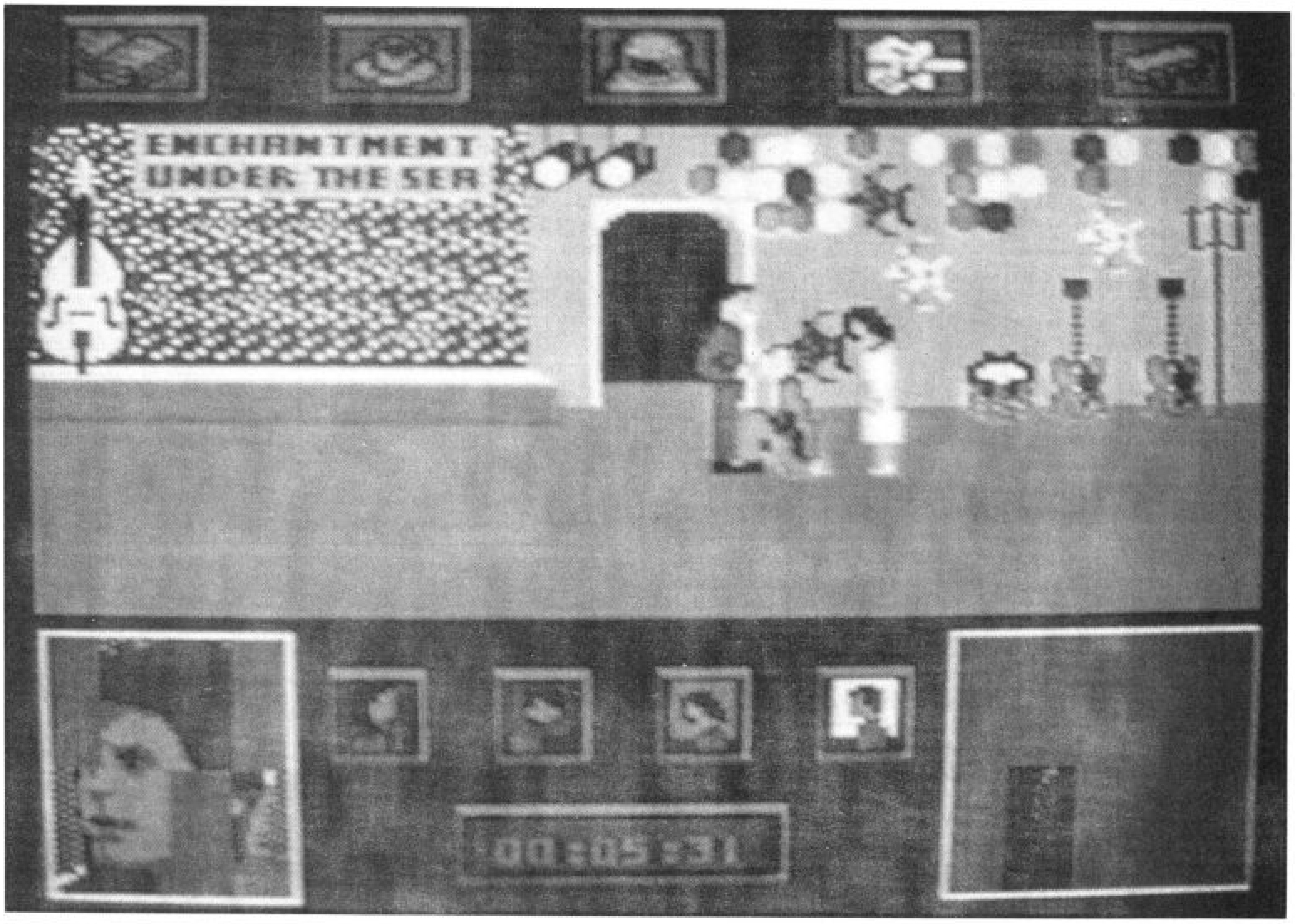
The one niggling doubt at the back of my mind is the game's staying power. Once you've escaped you may not wish to play again.

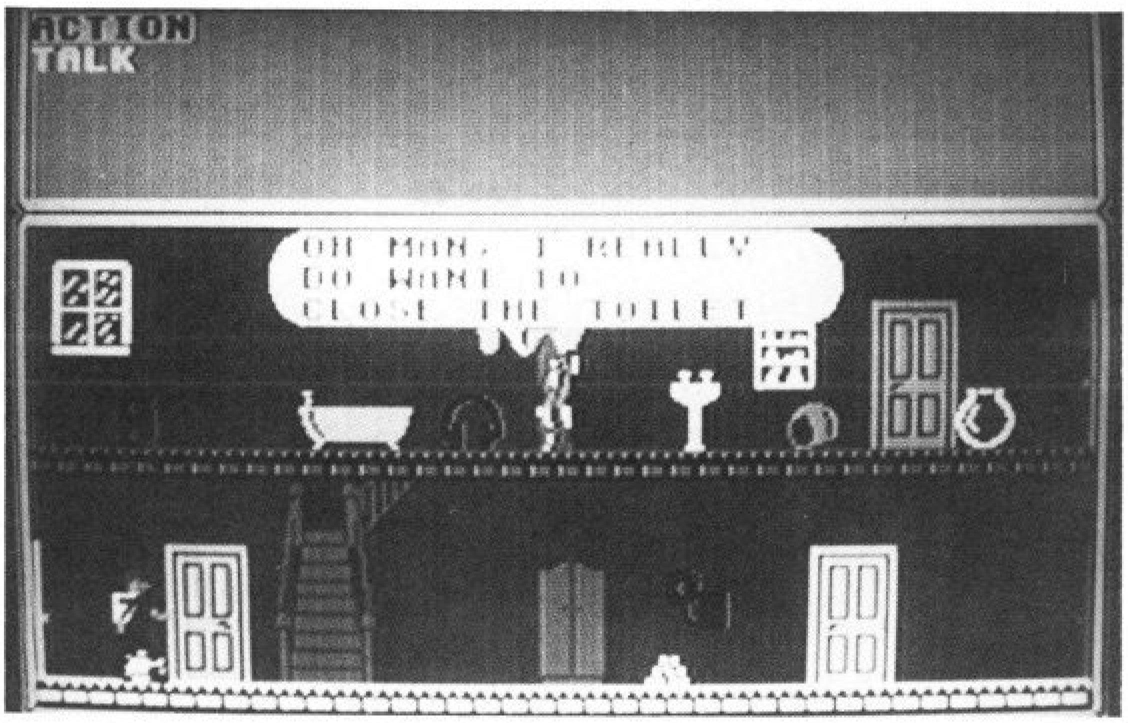
Eugene Lacey

Graphics	★★★
Sound	★★★★
Toughness	★★★★
Staying Power	★
Value	★★★

Inside the sandwich bar — a good place to fall in love.

Photographs in the bottom corners fill in when you are doing well.





Ha, what a scream! Toilet! Brilliant humour guys.

THE YOUNG ONES
Commodore 64/128
Orpheus
Price: £7.95/disk

Totally brilliant concept! A game based on the anarchic cult comedy programme The Young Ones. Crazy! Fascist! Snot! Willybotrot!

I was a Young Ones fan but it's funny how when you write it down the humour starts to sound a bit weak, a bit, well, childish. That's a problem, but perhaps not as much a problem as trying to get the humour over in the first place.

Mosaic had a good stab at it with *Adrian Mole*, but that was done on an adventure format. It was based on a book and hence quite texty. Orpheus' effort at the Young Ones tries to do it as an arcade style adventure, sort of Wally style. The result is a disaster.

The idea behind the game is to play one of the characters and collect seven or eight items that will enable you to move out of the house. You control your character via screen options. Thus at every occasion you pull the joystick back to select action, speech or walking. You have no real control over movement apart from setting it off.

The worst part is the other characters just wander around saying the same things about objects. "Nobody move until Mike the coolperson picks up the thermos flask", is not funny especially after endless repetition.

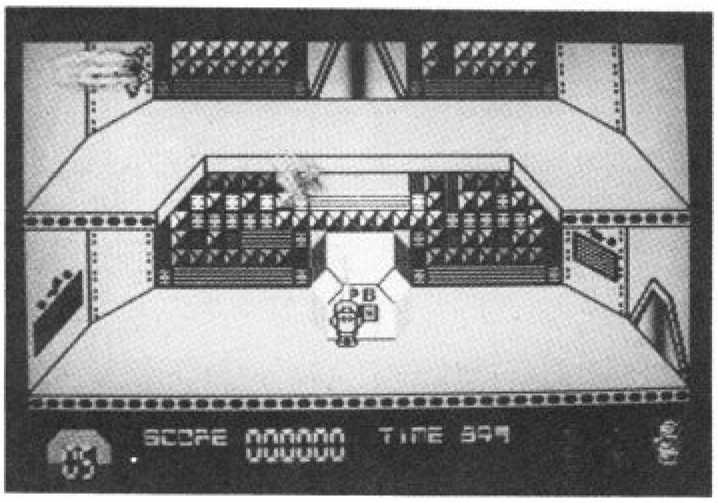
My character (Vyvyan) just kept saying things like "I've got a really bad hangover, and all I can think about is picking up the guitar case". I took this as a prompt so I got him to pick it up, whereupon he wanted to put it back again. OK, redherring — but it's just not fun, nor is it compulsive.

After exploring the various locations which are graphically average and getting bored picking things up and putting them down to try and get things to happen I started to wonder if I was doing this all wrong. Now I'm certain that it was Orpheus who did it all wrong. They had a good idea but were completely unable to implement it.

Elite had a great idea with Scooby Doo but couldn't get it working and shelved it (turn to Hotshots for an update). Orpheus should have done the same thing, perhaps there was too much at stake.

Mike Pattenden

Graphics	★★★
Sound	
Toughness	★★★★★
Staying Power	★
Value	★



Conceptual humour in Spaced Out, whoops, ruined the joke!

SPACE DOUBT
Commodore 64/128
CRL
Price: £9.95

Space doubt, geddit? Funny software from CRL. Their latest offering comes complete with a little comic for you to read while waiting for the game to load. The comic follows the adventures of the crew of the U.S.S. Omnibus and it's mission to transport a cargo of food to the hungry workers of the planet Niblondis.

As tends to happen in these stories, The Omnibus is barely 200 light years from earth when it comes under heavy bombardment from a meteor storm. But the meteor storm is not all it appears to be and is in fact a swarm of dreaded bogloids — they live to eat.

The bogloids break through the hull of The Omnibus and make straight for the cargo hold wherein are stored the food supplies for the hungry workers of Niblondis.

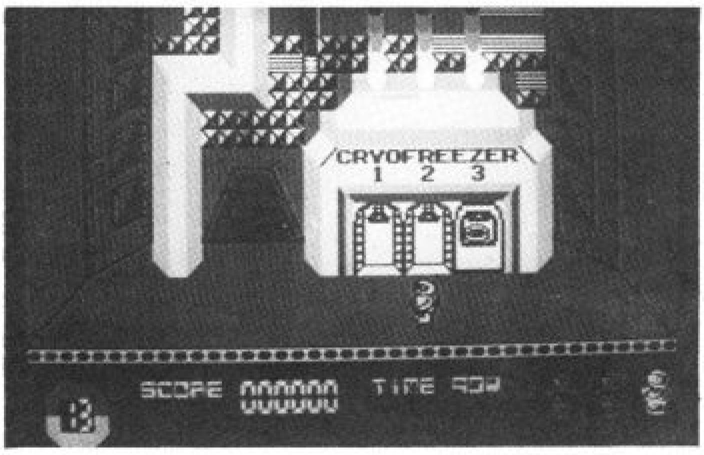
Commander Sock, Colonel Skvijibod, and Major Underpant are in turn awoken from cryongenic sleep to blast the Bogloids, but only Underpant survives to complete the mission and land on Niblondis. The only problem is that by this time the Bogloids have eaten all the food that hasn't been blasted.

Space Doubt is one of the most enjoyable comics I've read since they put up the price of The Beano. I stayed with it through to the last page. The graphics are very good indeed, though it's a bit of a shame they're only black and white. The game on the other hand is pretty boring stuff. It more or less follows the story in the comic, you taking the role of each of the three space heroes. Unfortunately, five minutes of blasting Bogloids against different backgrounds and I was dying of boredom.

Ken McMahon

Graphics	★★★
Sound	★★
Toughness	★★★
Staying Power	★★
Value	★★

Bagloids in the freezer. Stick to the comic.



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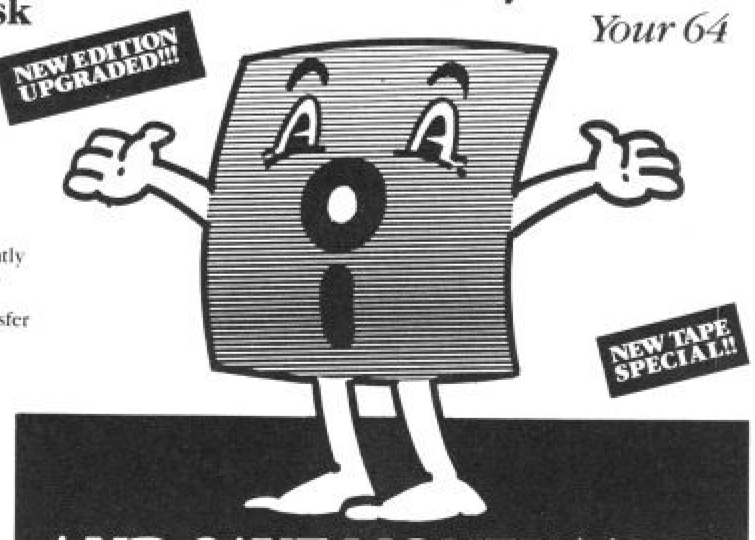
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Lightwave



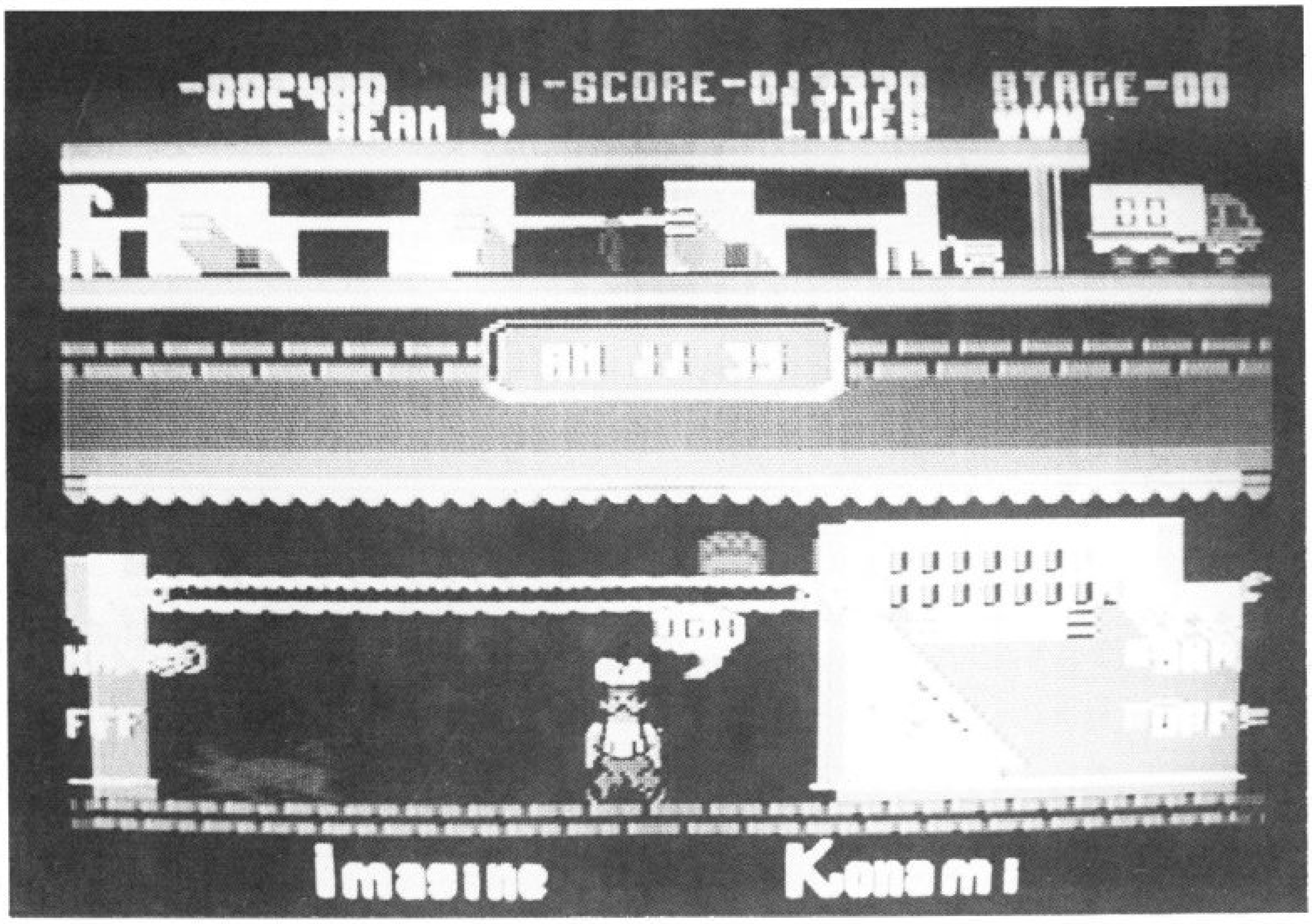
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Comic Bakery — Joe tells you what he thinks of the game.

COMIC BAKERY
Commodore 64/128
Imagine
Price: £7.95/cass

Another in the Imagine/Konami series and before I say anything else let me tell you this is by far the worst yet!

You play the part of Joe the baker, who has to protect his loaves from the bread-snatching Raccoons. If you think this sounds remotely interesting you would be wrong.

As the game loads you will see a pretty title screen with some excellent music which may sound familiar if you own either *Rambo* or *Transformers*. There are no game options at the start other than "Press fire to play".

The screen is divided into two halves: on the top you have the scanner showing which machines you must turn on (because the trouble-making raccoons have turned them off) on the bottom half is you, Joe the baker, looking like a fat over-paid chef. This part of the game is wonderfully drawn with great use of colour. Your job is to save the factory with the aid of your "Racoon-Stunner"!!

The pests come from three different directions — left, right and above. They are all shootable but an extra bonus is earned by stunning the ones on the lower level and kicking them across the floor. This is by far my favourite part of the game.

The ones at the top pinch the loaves of bread which are rolling from machine to machine. Although I loathe the flea-bitten creatures I must admit they are graphically perfect.

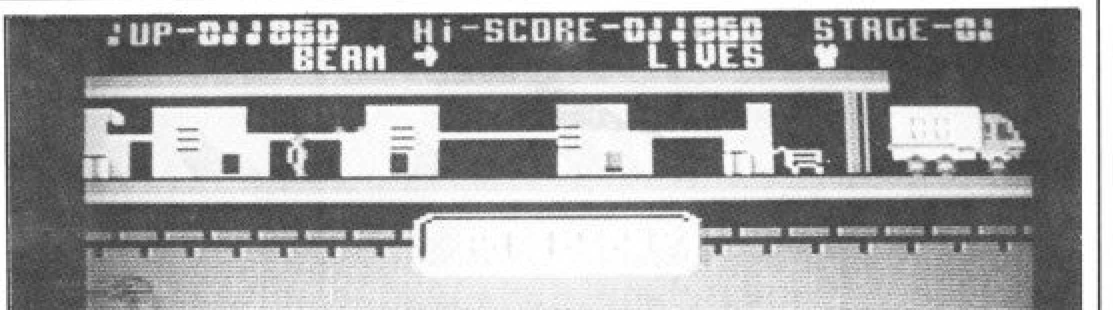
Another nice touch is when Joe bumps into a raccoon, which makes him jump, and double-up as if he had received a baseball-bat in the groin.

When you have helped so many loaves of bread to the safety of the van, a screen is shown with a picture of a bakers shop, which gives you a rating such as "Yeh" or "Fine". While you sit there wondering what's next, don't bother, I'll tell you, absolutely nothing! Just the same boring stuff with a change of colour.

One word sums this up. As baker Joe so rightly says, "UGH". I couldn't agree more.

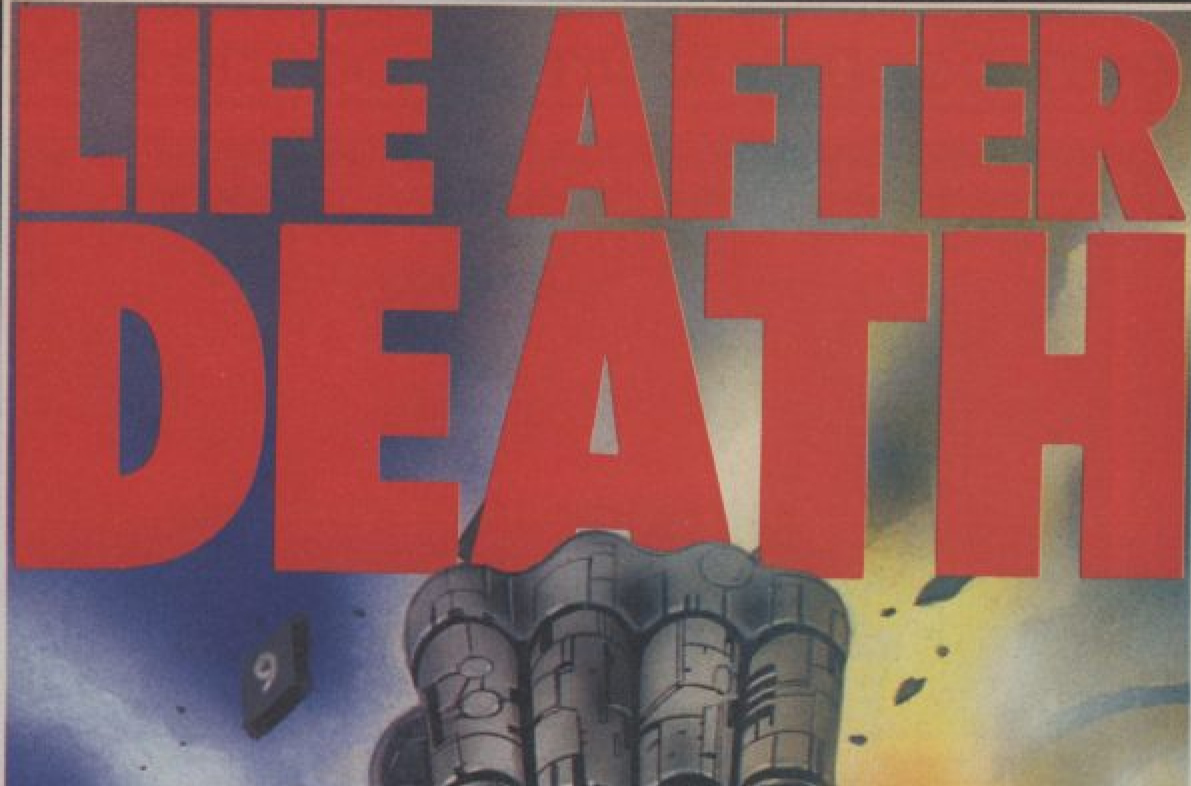
Ferdy Hamilton

Graphics	★★★★
Sound	★★★★
Toughness	★★
Staying Power	
Value	★★



Blast the Racoons to stop them scoffing your bread.

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Q. *Sounds like science fiction! I suppose it's available in 2001.*
A. ***It's here now!***
Q. *I'll believe it when I see it!*
A. ***Exactly, so why don't you go to your local computer shop.***

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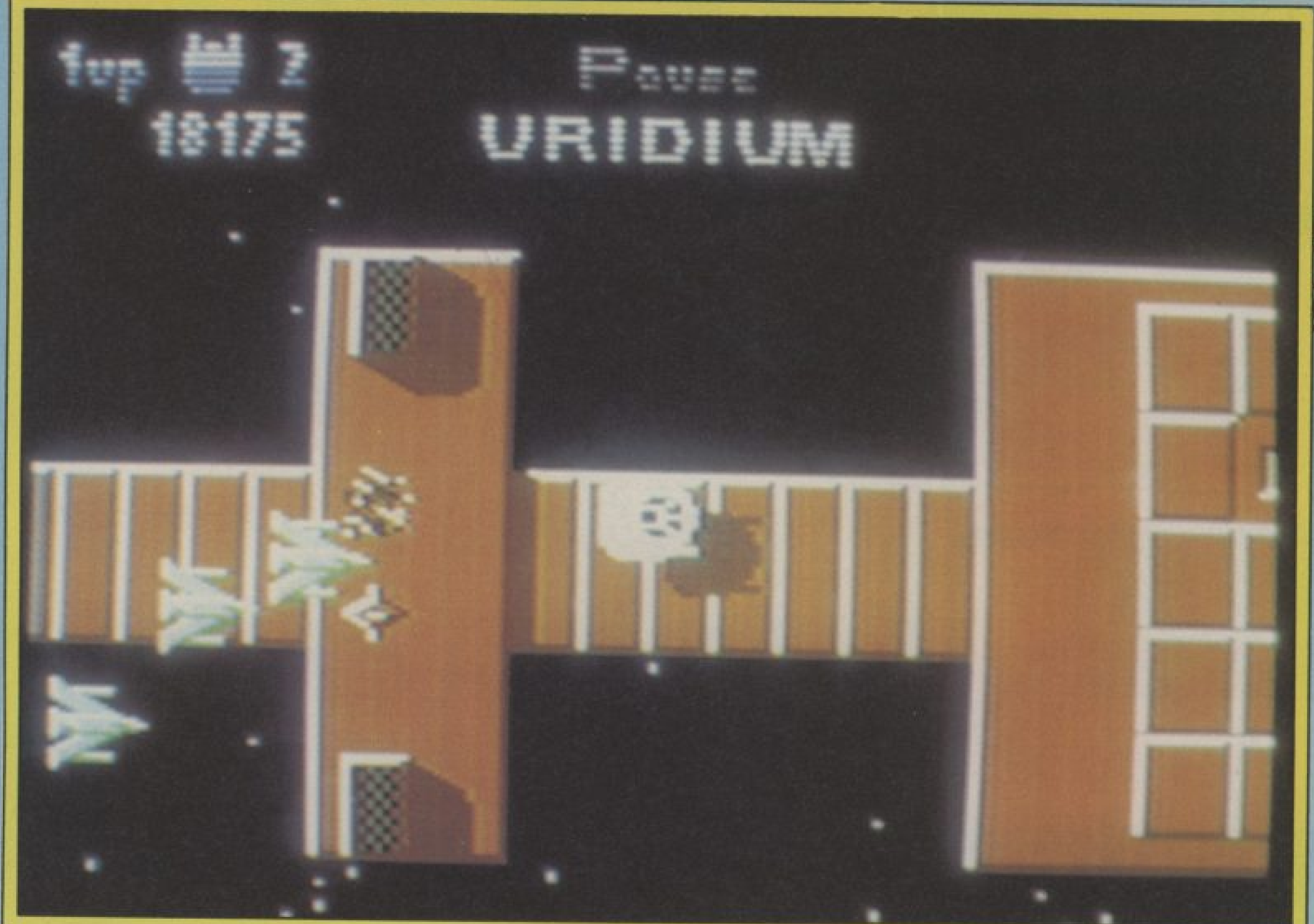
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Price: £9.95/cass

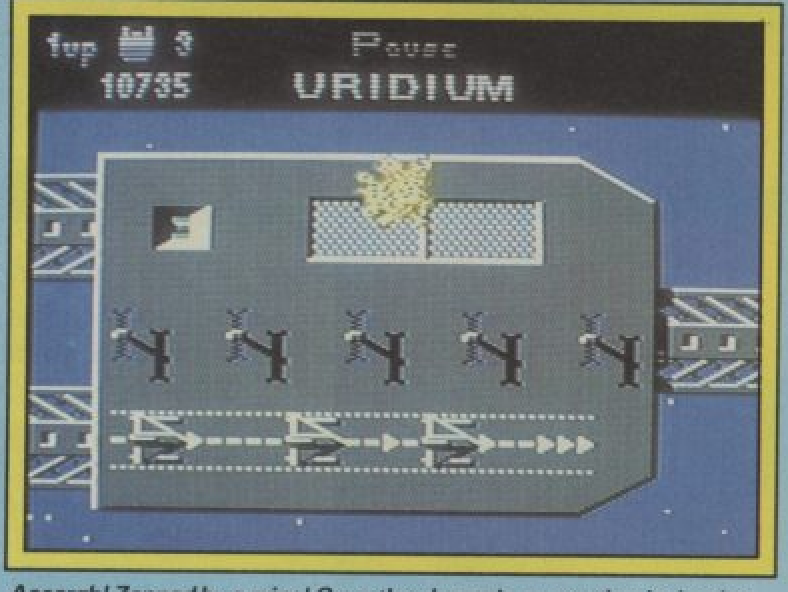
This is it, a shoot 'em up so good you feel as if you should be inserting two ten pence pieces into your 64 before each game.

It really is just like blasting away on a coin-op. Programmer Andrew Braybrook is happy to acknowledge that *Uridum* has its roots in pay per play arcade games.

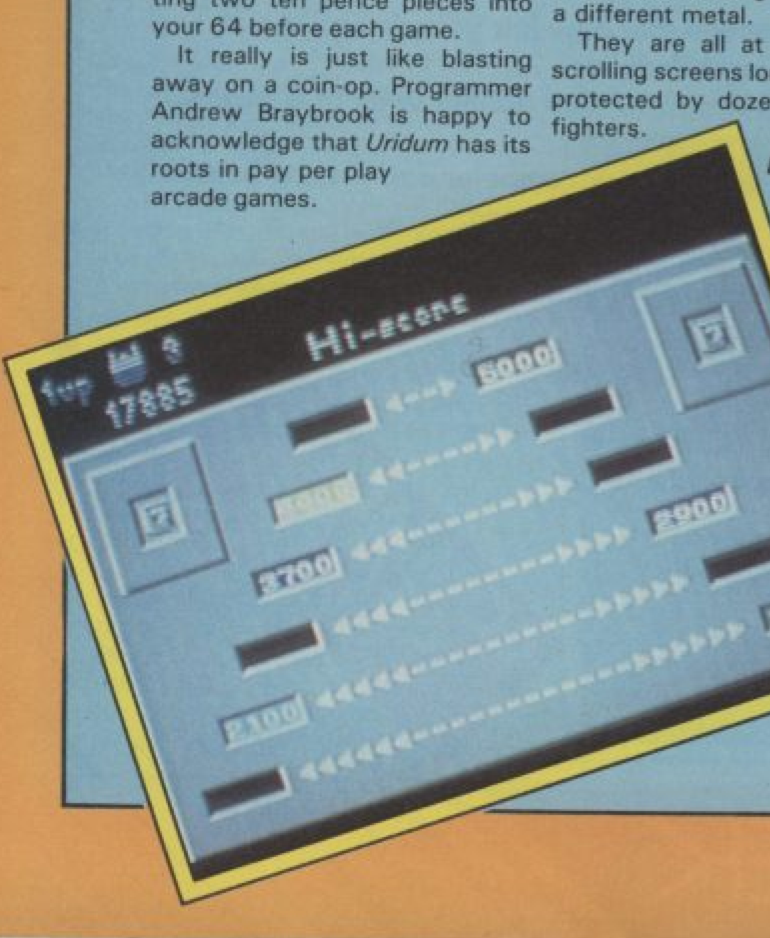
"I suppose it's a derivative of *Defender*, *Scramble* and half a dozen other arcade games all rolled into one".

The aim of the game is to destroy sixteen space fortresses that are cruising slowly towards your home planet. The fortresses are called Super Dreadnoughts — each one taking its name from a different metal.

They are all at least sixteen scrolling screens long and each is protected by dozens of smaller fighters.



Aaaargh! Zapped by a mine! Once they home in on you they're hard to shake off.



Bonus screen. It helps to listen carefully rather than watch.

Paradroid fans will spot an instant likeness as Andrew Braybrook's trade mark — shiny metal, is very much in evidence on each of the Dreadnoughts.

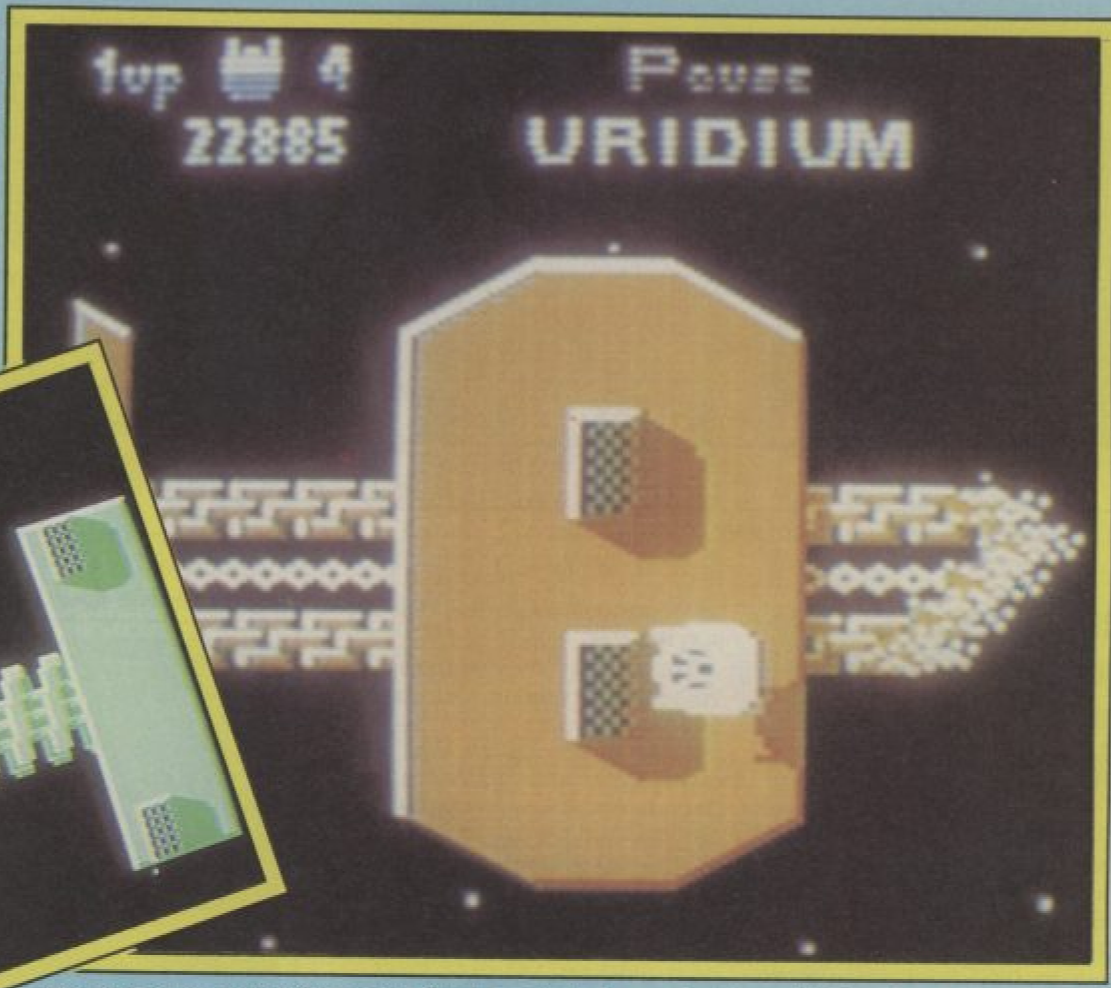
When you see the quality of *Uridium* it is difficult to believe that less than a year ago Andrew didn't even own a 64.

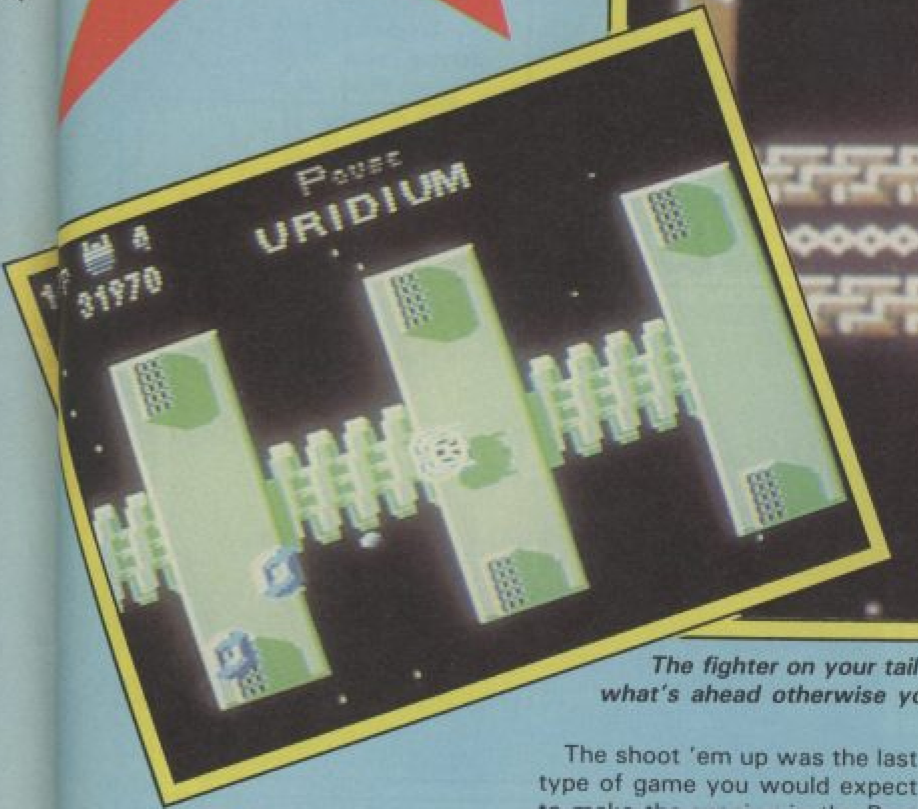
When you press to begin you are treated to an excellent piece of animation as your Manta fighter emerges from the interplanetary transporter, flips around, showing its wing span and then — zoom — it bursts forward and homes in upon a Dreadnought at full speed.

In seconds a wave of fighters sweeps past you. You fire like crazy but are lucky to down any of them on your first few attempts.

Bonus points are awarded for downing the Dreadnoughts protection fleets so you about turn and give chase. It becomes clear that manouevering the Manta is not easy. Pretty soon you are swaying back and forth in your

Screen Star





The fighter on your tail has just fired a rocket at you. Easily avoided but keep your eye on what's ahead otherwise you might run slap into a wall.

seat as you struggle to turn in time to blast the enemy.

But the Dreadnought's Protection Fighters are not all the Manta pilot has to worry about. There are also the deadly homing mines which come at you from the flashing generator ports. The only way of dealing with these is to beat a hasty retreat.

To destroy a Super Dreadnought first of all you have to land on it. To do this you have to wait for the "Land Now" signal to flash and then fly to the extreme right of the Super Dreadnought where you will find the runway.

When you touch down you pass into the fuel rod chamber where you can select 'Quit' or your bonus. Either way, you have to leave the chamber before the countdown reaches zero.

When you take off you fly as quickly as possible away from the vapourising Super Dreadnought — strafing any remaining surface craft as you go.

On later Dreadnoughts there are certain ships that can only be destroyed after the Dreadnought starts to vapourise. This means that you will have to be extremely sharp on the joystick to earn bonus points at that level.

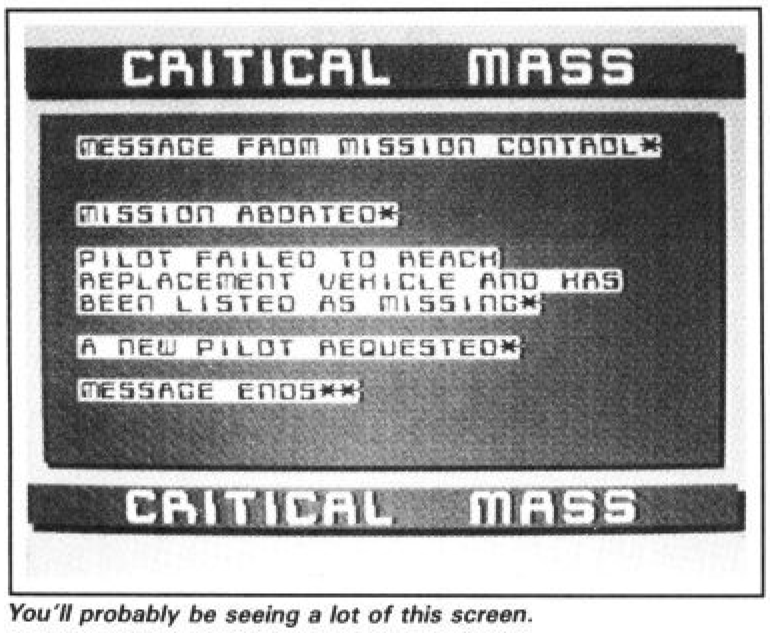
The shoot 'em up was the last type of game you would expect to make the running in the Best Games league at the beginning of '86. But here it is — a shoot 'em up better than anything that has come before that your collection will be pretty dull without it.

Eugene Lacey

Graphics	★★★★★
Sound	★★★★★
Toughness	★★★★
Staying Power	★★★★
Value	★★★★

A level completed and the dreadnought disintegrates. Head back and pick off any targets you missed.





You'll probably be seeing a lot of this screen.

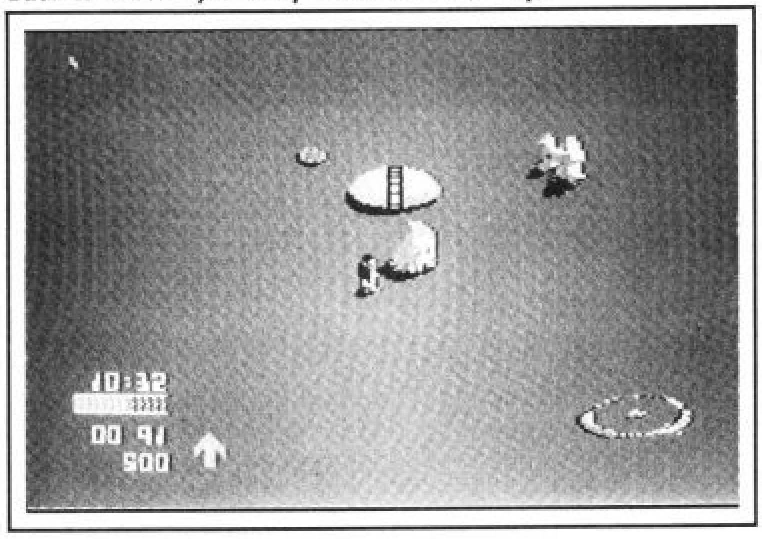
CRITICAL MASS
Commodore 64/128
Durell
Price: £8.95

Critical Mass has that look about it that suggests it might be quite good. Looks of course can be deceptive.

The action is set on an asteroid where an advanced anti-matter conversion plant has been occupied by aliens after a surprise attack. Your mission is to fly in and disable the plant before the aliens can destroy it and cause an enormous black hole. OK it's just the plot.

You do this by flying east in your craft, avoiding rock mases alien defences and mines, penetrating the plant wall and taking out the guard posts. Sounds like a super fast shoot-out eh? Well it's not. The reason for this being that control of the craft is so finicky — the one directional stuff like in the old asteroids — that you have to proceed at a snails pace to avoid hitting the obstacles. This however also makes you a sitting duck for the enemy forces. Swinging the ship round to line up a target is a laborious struggle.

Back to base in your Jetpack for another ship.



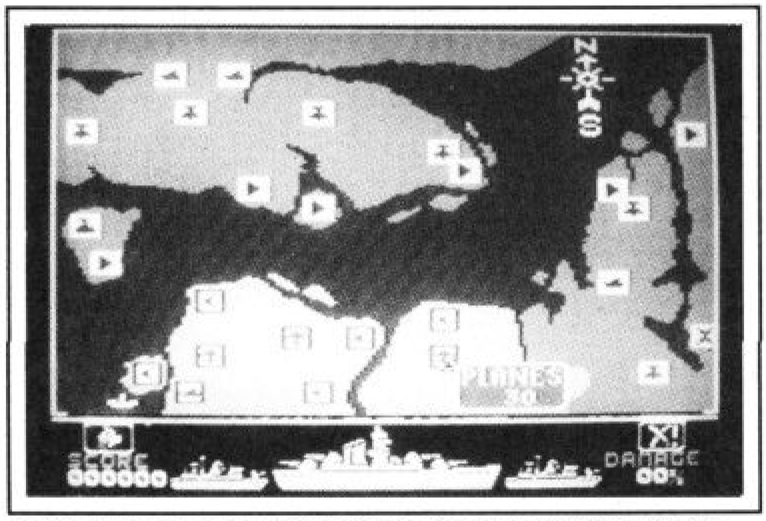
Should you lose your craft you have the chance to get another, by flying off in a jet pack in search of a replacement pod. The controls here are even more difficult, and for some reason you become a delicacy for worms which pop up from the ground. You'll certainly have to master this if you want to get any further with it, because your ships disappear like nobody's business and the fact that you cannot blow up obstacles exactly make this fast trigger stuff either.

Graphics are clear if a little on the small side, but the sound is poor. Bad sound effects and lousy tune. It mightn't look so duff if it weren't for the fact that I'd been playing *Uridium* constantly before I got round to this. There again maybe it would.

If you want a really tough challenge then this will give you one, but I don't like games which substitute imagination for niggly controls.

Mike Pattenden

Graphics	★★★★
Sound	★
Toughness	★★★★
Staying Power	★★
Value	★★



Death Wake: A major retribution to the war against software piracy.

DEATH WAKE
Commodore 64/128
Quicksilva
Price: £8.95

Quicksilva are being remarkably reticent about their latest weapon in the war against software piracy. Stunningly effective, yet so simple it's surprising no one thought of it sooner. In Death Wake, Quicksilva have managed to produce a game that is so boring no one in their right mind would want to copy it.

A battle simulation straight out of WWII, the objective is to penetrate the enemy's defences and blow up their atom bomb factory. First you must complete the air assignment phase. A map shows the location of your own and the enemy bases. You can mount an attack on any enemy bases from up to three of your own.

Having made the strategic decision as to which bases you will attack pressing the scramble button causes three little puffs of smoke to appear on the map, thus putting the enemy bases out of action for a while. The computer/enemy then does the same to your bases. If this sounds the slightest bit exciting then I've been overgenerous in my description of it.

Now it's time for the torpedo planes. Your battleship, The Undaunted, sits at the left of the screen flanked by two escorts. Three torpedo planes appear at the right and approach The Undaunted, as you shoot at them. They drop their torpedoes and, with a nimble flick of the joystick (it doesn't really have to be that nimble) you swerve out of the way. This goes on for about two minutes then it's back to air assignment, which appears after each arcade screen.

Next up are the torepedo boats which you must fire at before they fire at you. A bit more difficult than the planes, but no less boring. After another bash at the air assignment, mines. The mines scroll on from the left and you steer The Undaunted out of the way. The battleships which follow are refitted torpedo boats and the bombers are identical to the torpedo planes except they go on for ever.

At this point I switched channels on the t.v. It was The Monday Matinee — The Spanish Gardener with Dirk Bogarde. A slushy sentimental job with Dirk as the gardener who forms a friendship with his boss's son and ends up in the nick on account of being framed by the jealous butler. Not really my kind of film, but a million times more enjoyable than playing Death Wake. (*er thanks Ken we reckon anything with Dirk in it's OK — Ed*).

Ken McMahon

Graphics	★★★
Sound	★★
Toughness	★★
Staying Power	★
Value	★

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BARGAIN BASEMENT

Cheapo of the Month

KANE
Commodore 64/128
Mastertronic
Price: £1.99

I've not always been that enamoured with Mastertronic's output, preferring to think that you're better off hanging onto those two sovs for a better cause. Until now that is.

You may remember our review of Ultimate's *Outlaws* a few issues back. Well here's a better game all round that weighs in at a quarter of the price.

The action takes place across four screens each taking a typical — well sort of typical — western scenario for its inspiration.

You are Marshall McGraw a Wild West hero, charged with the task of making peace with the Wagari Indians (nice non-racist touch). Long-term peace however, is jeopardised by the machinations of the NAST railway company who plan to drive a track right through sacred Indian burial ground.

As McGraw you have to keep the natives sweet whilst fighting off a variety of renegades and mercenaries hired by the NAST Railway Co.

Your first task is to win the respect of the Wagari. Strangely enough, this is done by shooting down hordes of tasty ducks. Should have a Jack Charlton licence on it. Well perhaps, but you're shooting the little blighters down with a bow and arrow not a 12 bore.

Good shooting earns you peace medals and it's these tokens of Indian esteem that you have to get back to the President to conclude the peace, though the sound a stricken duck makes should have been reward enough I feel.

So you rush off from the duck shoot, mount your horse and charge across the plains to Kane. This I found to be the most difficult bit because if you miss time a jump you're painfully unsaddled. If you make it to Kane you can expect an ambush by the local hired ruffians. '(Thought: if they liked soul music would they be called the Kane Gang?)

Defend yourself from the attack, by dodging about picking men off. All their actions are designed to stop you getting that train outta town to Washington intact with the peace medals. Race to the depot and try and grab that train before it's out of reach.

This game has got enough action in it to fill a John Ford western. It's addictive and it's fun. The sound effects are more than adequate and the graphics are clear and colourful with smooth scrolling. McGraw's bow action and the horse's galloping are particularly good.

At last I can honestly say two quid well spent.

Mike Pattenden

Graphics	★★★★
Sound	★★★★
Toughness	★★★★
Staying Power	★★★★
Value	★★★★★

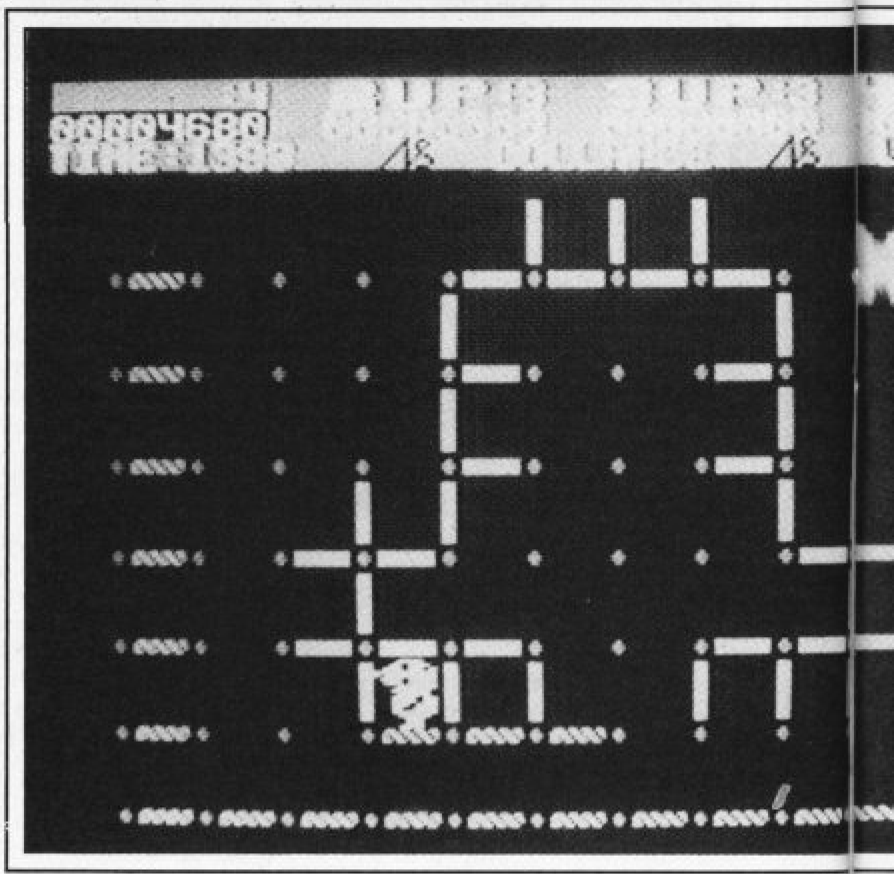


Right: Marshall McGraw on a duck shoot.

It's the time when a man's gotta do what a man's gotta do.



BARGAIN BASEMENT



TALES OF THE CAT
Commodore 64/128
Budgie Budget Software
Price: £2.99

First impressions of *Tales of the Cat* are not too favourable. Oh no, not another Frogger rip-off is the first thought that enters your head when its crude graphics first appear on screen.

You have this busy road with cars whooshing by, the cat can prowl left and right and attempt to cross the road. But apart from that — there ends any simularities to Frogger.

The aim of the game is to pick up the articles on the other side of the road. These are a compass, scroll, fishbone, can, tin opener, a mouse, and some bird seed.

Once you have picked something up by simply nipping across the road and making contact with it you can give the big black dog the slip and go on to the next screen.

Each new street is an even tougher challenge for our unfortunate moggy. Screen two, for example, has a rather awkward break dancer, screen three some falling flower pots — and so it gets worse.

Each new hazard is added to the ones from the previous ones so that before very long you are dodging cars, dogs, falling flower pots, breakdancers, and falling milk bottles as you attempt to pick up your item.

To be honest *Tales of the Cat* is not the best game I have ever seen — the animation is not convincing and the game is pretty easy.

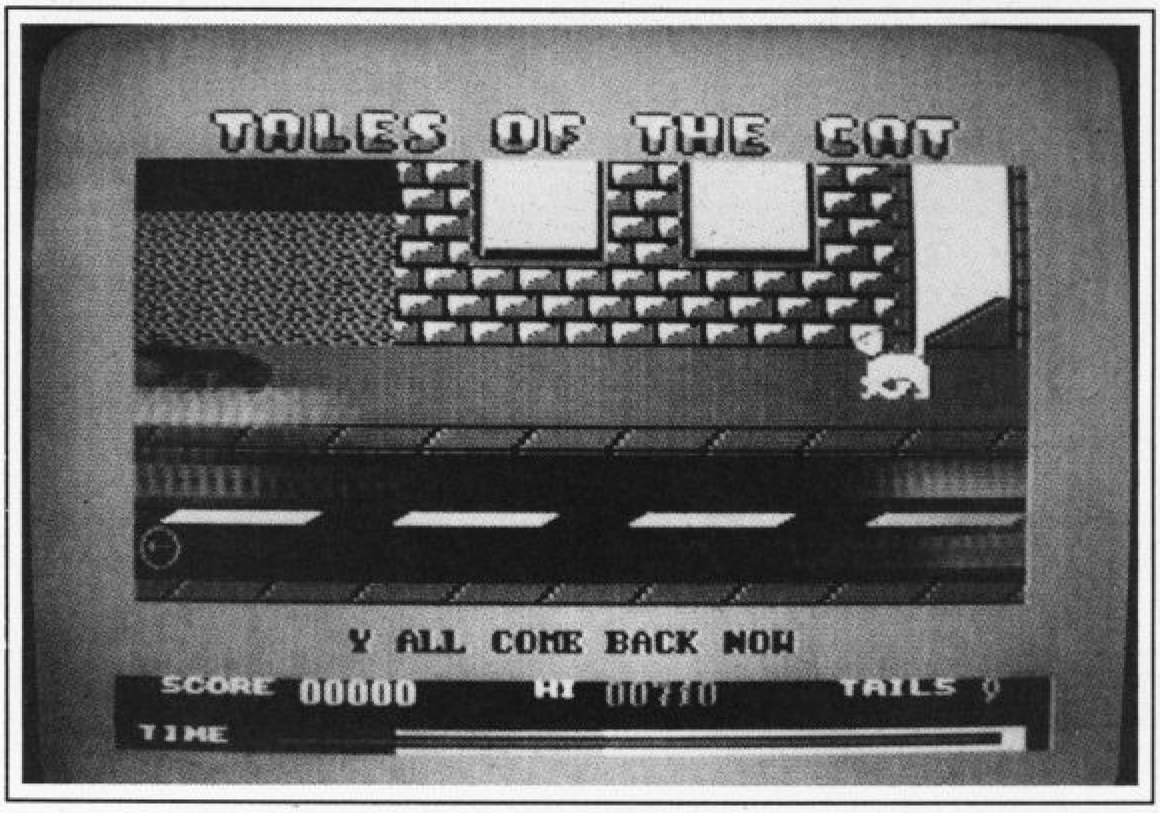
In its favour *Tales of the Cat* would be highly suitable as a game for young children.

But for hard nosed gamers looking for a worthwhile challenge on the cheap then don't expect to get it here. Even an average gamer would crack this in an afternoon.

Eugene Lacey

Graphics	★★
Sound	★★
Toughness	★★
Staying Power	★★
Value	★★

Tales of the Cat — not the Budgie's best bargain.



COLLAPSE
Commodore 64
Firebird Software
Price: £1.99/disk

Collapse is Firebird's latest offering in their budget software range. It is an arcade game with a difference, and the idea behind it is something very original.

On the first screen you are presented with a matrix of dots. In the middle of it there are a pattern of grey sticks.

The object of this weird and wonderful game is to turn all the grey sticks blue and then to collapse them, all in one go if possible. That may sound all very straightforward but playing the game is a different matter!

You take the role of Zen, who luckily is a magician — but not all the time. There are two modes of play: When Zen has magic, and when he doesn't. When he has magiz Zen can float and sprinkle Magic-dust which kills the time-eating monsters.

Why doesn't he keep his magical powers all the time? . . . Because he can only turn the sticks blue when he has no powers. (*Obvious really — Ed.*)

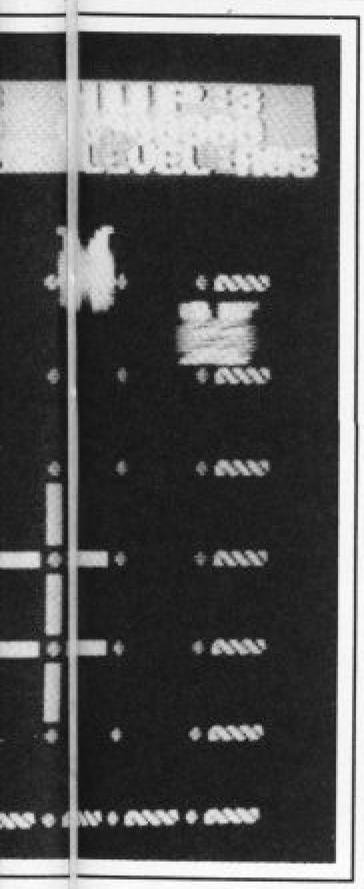
But of course as in any game there are other hazards. You have a time limit, and there are time-eating monsters, who will gladly drain one hundred units of your precious time. These monsters are easily stunned with a sprinkle of your magic dust.

When you time limit runs out

With the price of the average 64 game now hovering around the ten pounds mark, budget games are now a popular alternative. As the demand grows so the quality has improved.

This month we begin a regular section devoted to the the cheapie and find that we have a game so good that we nearly made it a Screen Star. Instead *Kane* is our first Cheapo of the Month.

As the big software houses whinge that budget games should be excluded from the charts, Commodore User says they're often a lot better than expensively produced turkeys beefed up with a costly licensing deal.



Collapse — Firebird's latest introduces some original ideas at a bargain price.

you lose one of your three lives. If you complete the first sheet you will come to another, which has a different pattern of sticks. After that there's only ninety-four to go! It is possible on all of the ninety-six sheets to collapse all of the sticks on one go, although I haven't managed that.

Collapse is a good and very playable game, which proves that good games can be produced at pocket-money prices. Well worth buying.

Ferdy Hamilton

Graphics	★★
Sound	★★
Toughness	★★★★★
Staying Power	★★★★
Value	★★★★

MASTER OF MAGIC
Commodore 64
Mastertronic
Price: £2.99/disk

Mastertronic's range of games gets bigger and bigger every month, and as the catalogue increases so does the quality. This month's selection of cheapies have all been excellent.

Master of Magic is a slice of arcade adventuring that even Ultimate could learn a few things from. The plot has you dragged underwater by a powerful hand whilst exploring some underground caverns. It could happen to anyone! The hand belongs to Thelric, master of magic and evil, and he refuses to let you go until you've retrieved the lost amulet of immortality.

This is your cue to head off into the maze of caverns with only a few leaves from your maths book stuffed in your pocket to map your way with.

Naturally there are hordes of nasties hungrily awaiting your entry into their territory — among whose number are hellhounds, skeletons, orcs, bats and vampires.

As you explore you will find clues and useful items such as healing potions, and scrolls that furnish you with information.

The screen is split into three different areas. Top left shows a birds' eye view of your movements with the caverns unfolding as you progress. Top right is the printout which tells you exactly what's happening, ie 'The hellhound bit you'.

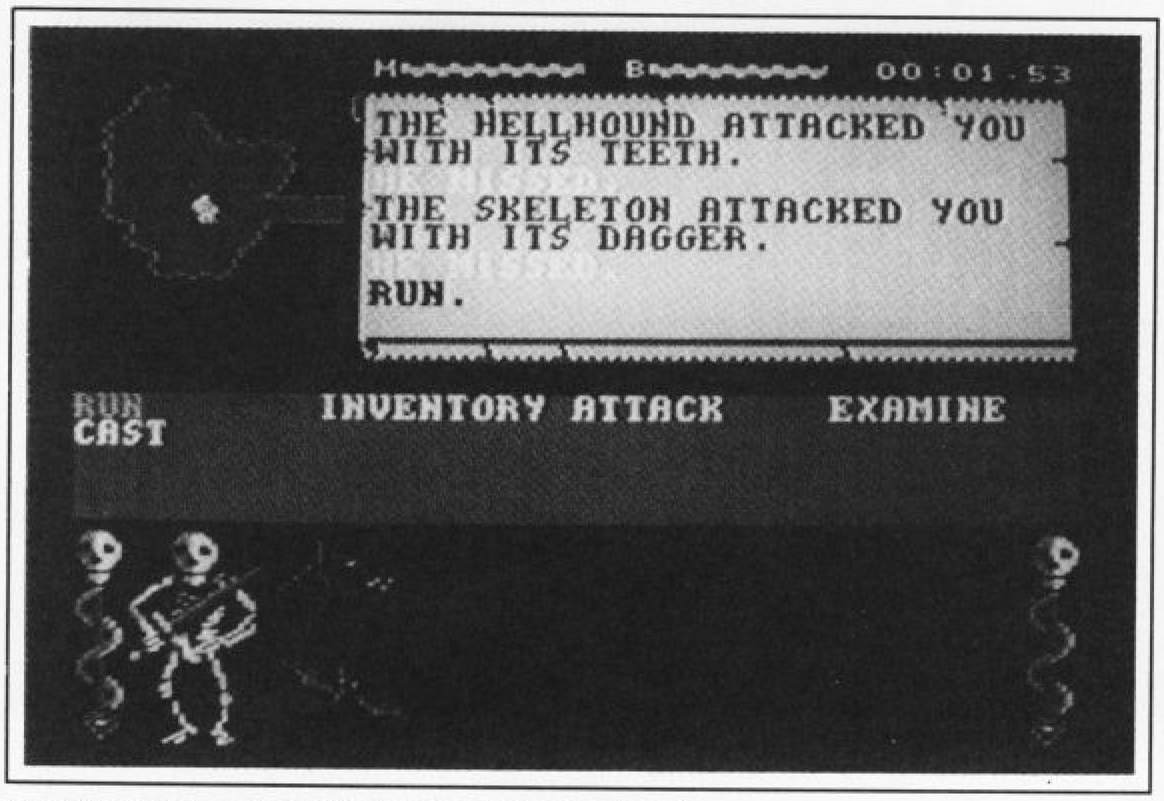
The centre space is a menu which allows you to choose from a set of options (normal adventure type things like examine, run, attack). At the bottom of the screen you're given a close-up of whatever confronts you, be it a door or a nasty.

But the problem with this display is that there's rather too much going on. The birds' eye view of your movement would have been better off expanded to cover a little more detail so making the bottom area redundant, whilst the information display scrolls too quickly when there's a lot happening. Nevertheless you get used to it all eventually.

The gameplay is nothing special for its type, but it's good enough, and for three quid it's great value.

I must put a paragraph aside to rave about what is one of Rob Hubbard's best pieces of music yet. It's original and it suits the style of game very well. And blow me if I wasn't humming the tune all the way home. Buy this game for a good tune if for nothing else!

Mike Pattenden



Master of Magic — "humming the tune all the way home".

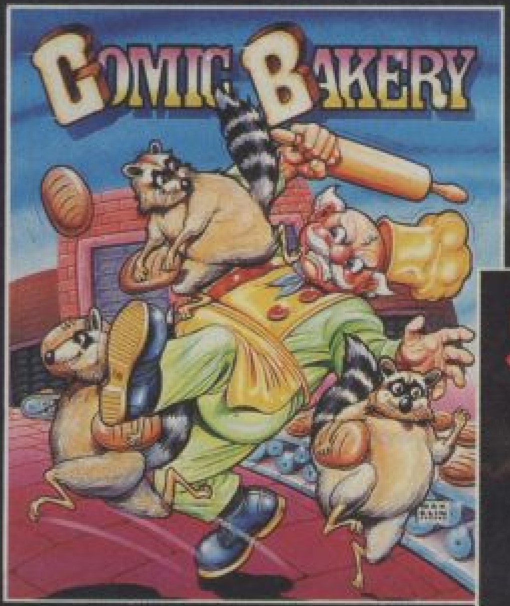
Graphics	★★★★
Sound	★★★★★
Toughness	★★★★
Staying Power	★★★★
Value	★★★★★

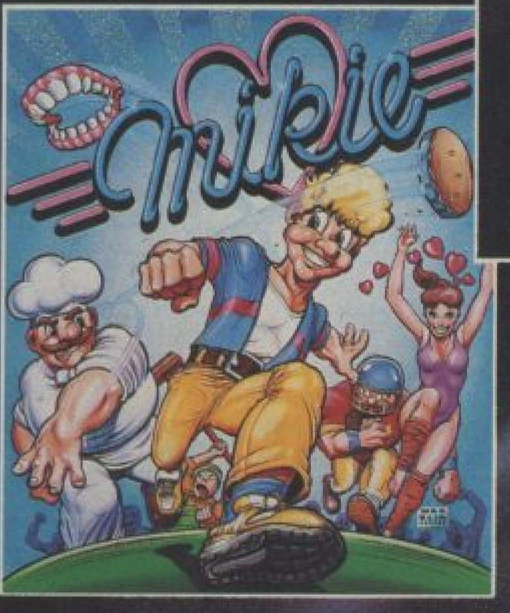
BASEMENT BARGAIN

COMMODORE 64

Arcade

Killer-byt
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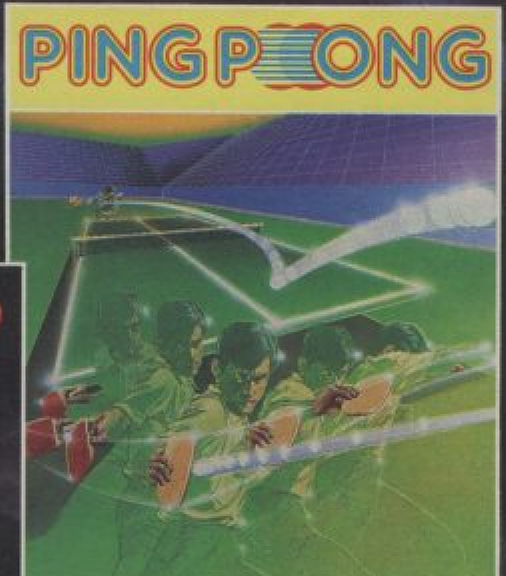
imagine ..the name of the game

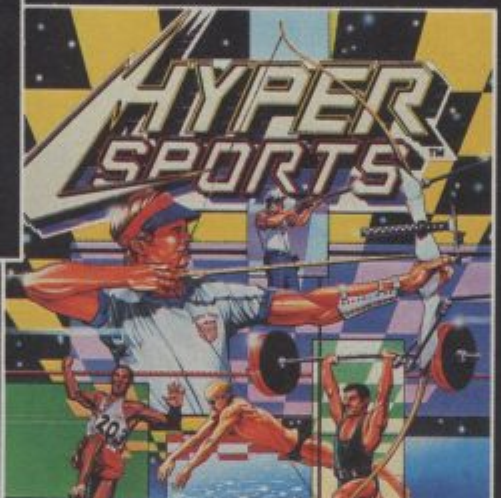
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C 16



It's time for a bit of oriental minion munching with the Kung Fu Kid.

KUNG FU KID
Commodore 16
Gremlin Graphics
Price: £6.95/disk

Oriental fighting games have finally made it on to the C16 with this and Amco's Thai Boxing, but can you expect a decent *Fist* equivalent?

Emperor To Ming has banished you to the eighth skill level. Exactly why he has done this terrible thing is not altogether clear, but according to Gremlin it has been brought on by your own folly. That will teach you to fool around with the Emperor's daughter.

To get back to where you came from you must fight your way past eight different kinds of opposition, starting with the Emperor's minions.

You, The Kid, are standing in the middle of the screen dressed in what looks like a Windscale worker's overalls, but is I guess supposed to be a pair of kung fu pyjamas.

The minions attack from either side, but there are usually more coming from one side than the other. You have four options:
1: Stand your ground and let the

GULLWING FALCON
Commodore 16
Gremlin Graphics
Price: £6.95/disk

I don't think there's ever been a good version of the Buck Rogers arcade game for the 64 let alone the C16.

Undeterred Gremlin come forward with their offering and it's certainly a toughie.

This is probably the most difficult game I've ever played on the C16. One thing's for sure, *Gullwing Falcon* is not a game for rookie pilots.

It's one of those 3D type games where you get the illusion of actually flying into the TV screen.

The object is simply to shoot down the invading space pirates. On the first level there are 25 of these, if you manage to reach the second level there are 35, and so on.

If the pressure gets too great you can fly between the pillars of stone, or so it says on the inlay. 'The pirate ships dare not travel between the giant stone posts'. Who can blame them? All it takes is one pixel in the wrong direction and splat.

I found it took all my energy and concentration to avoid smashing into the pillars of stone which zoom up on you at about warp 10. When I wasn't doing that, I was doing my level best to avoid colliding with the space pirates.

On the rare occasions when I wasn't doing either I actually managed to shoot one or two down.

There's ninety-nine levels with a maximum of ninety-five aliens per level. Phew, that's trigger crunching in the extreme.

If there's one criticism I'd make it's that the joystick works the wrong way round. By which I mean that your ship goes left and right as it should, but when I pulled back on the joystick I expected it to go up and it did the opposite.

I reckon the programmers have done really well to get a 3D Buck Rogers type game out of the C16, but a game needs more than just technical merit.

If nothing else Gullwing is the kind of game that's so difficult it fires you with even greater determination to beat it. A must if you're looking for a really tough arcade challenge.

Ken McMahon

Graphics	★★★★
Sound	★★★
Toughness	★★★★★
Staying Power	★★★★
Value	★★★





minions bump into you. This is not recommended. As well as being quite boring it will deplete your energy reserves very quickly.

2: Run away. Equally ineffective. Either the minions catch up with you, or you bump into those coming in the opposite direction.

3: Jump over them. This is O.K. for single, isolated minions. But if there are several you'll get caught on the way down.

4: Punch them. In 99% of cases the most effective way to deal with minions and of course the only way to score points. Timing is critical, mistime it and the minion will bump into you, further depleting your energy reserves.

Of course the most successful method is a combination of all four of these. When you've punched sufficient minions on the nose (indicated on the minion meter) you get to have a bash at the next bunch.

Future opponent could include various oriental nasties from any one of sharigans (what's a sharigan?), daggers, swords, or magical pots.

To tell the truth I don't know which, I got pretty fed up after half an hour or so of minion munching. The game just doesn't have enough variety or incentive, to hold your attention for long enough to accomplish anything.

If you're looking for a C16 version of *Exploding Fist*, you'll be disappointed with this.

Ken McMahon

Graphics	★★★
Sound	★★★
Toughness	★★★★
Staying Power	★★
Value	★★

In keeping with our policy on the C16 there's more news and reviews in the mag than ever before to help out all you beleaguered owners out there. This month we've put together a software roundup set up a great competition along with our exclusive review of Commando and provided you with the first chart for C16 gamers. Look out for more next month.



A Buck Rogers game for the C16 with a really tough and exhausting test.

WORLD SERIES BASEBALL
Commodore 16
Imagine
Price: £7.95/disk

As a C16 owner myself, I know how annoying it can be to see games compared with their C64 equivalents and, inevitably found lacking.

I wouldn't be doing it now, were it not for the fact that this version compares well in virtually every respect with it's 64 predecessor.

Assuming you have two joysticks and at least one friend you can play against each other. If you lack the necessary hardware or company you can play the computer — a formidable adversary. I chose the second option and found myself batting at the crease, or home plate I should say.

You get an eagle's eye-view of the proceedings from a point just behind the backstop. Whilst this gives you an excellent view of the whole playing area, it's not very good for close up action.

For example, when you need to judge exactly when to hit the ball, you watch the giant video screen at the back of the stadium.

The normal rules of baseball apply. You get three chances to smack it one and make it to first base, or further if you can.

I found batting the most difficult operation of all. The direction of the ball seems to be controlled purely by timing rather than joystick direction. Nine times out of ten I was caught (by the same fielder) and if that didn't happen I just hit it straight back into the hands of the pitcher. Obviously more practice required there.

Once I had mastered it to some degree hitting a home run gave me as much pleasure as it must have Babe Ruth.

Fielding was much easier to pick up. As pitcher you have the option of varying the height and speed of the delivery by joystick position.

You can try foxing them with a high, slow one, or give it to 'em fast and low with a left hand swerve. I only got hit out of the park once!

More usually, when the ball is hit, the nearest fielder is moved to it under joystick control and automatically picks it up. Again using the joystick you can choose which base to return it to. If you move and think fast you might just run somebody out.

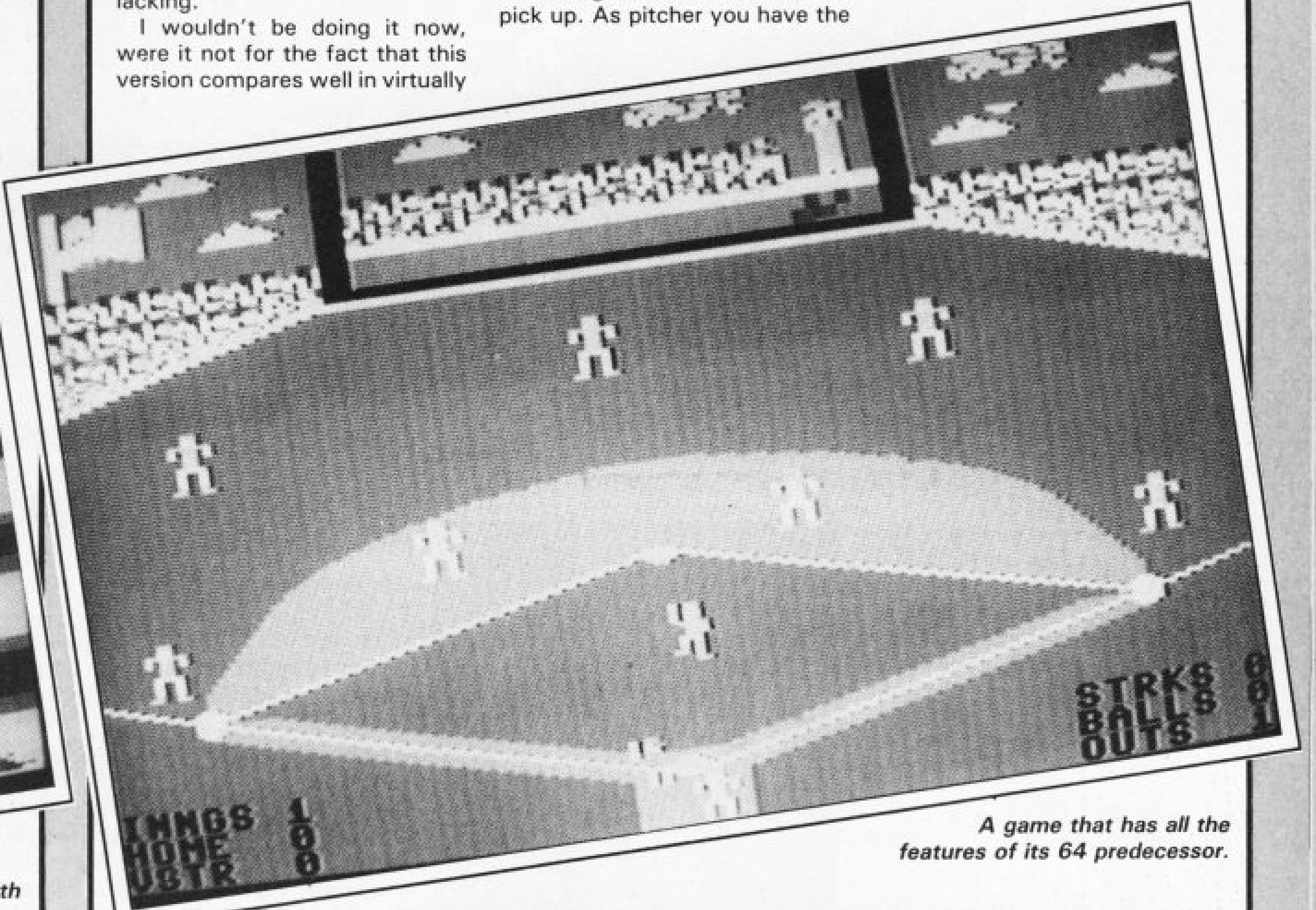
The innings is over when three men are out and a match consists of nine innings per side.

World Series Baseball is every bit as enjoyable as the 64 version. It's great fun playing the computer and I can imagine it would be even better against a real opponent.

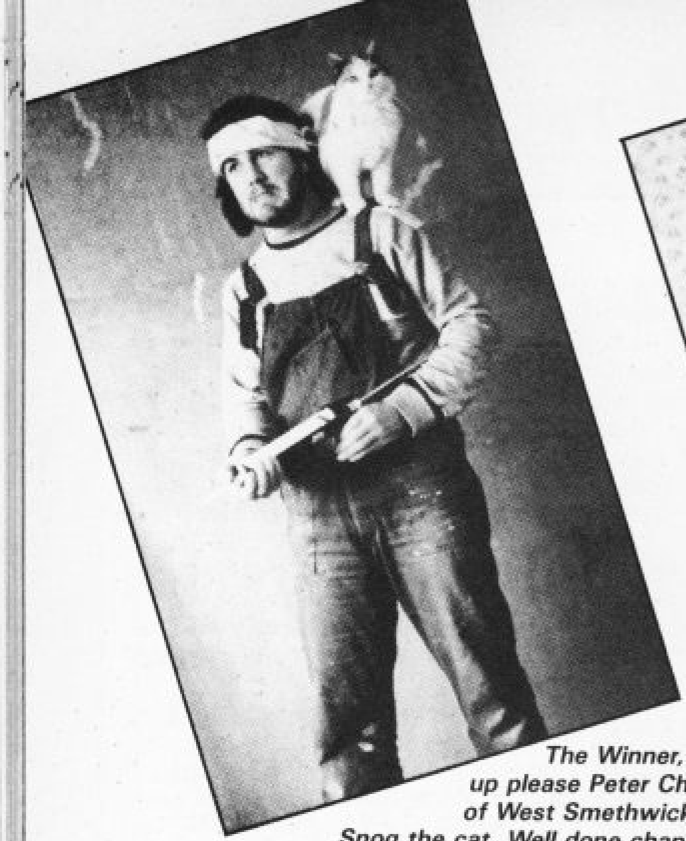
If you don't already have one I'd recommend you buy a second joystick at the same time!

Ken McMahon

Graphics	★★★★★
Sound	★★★
Toughness	★★★★
Staying Power	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★



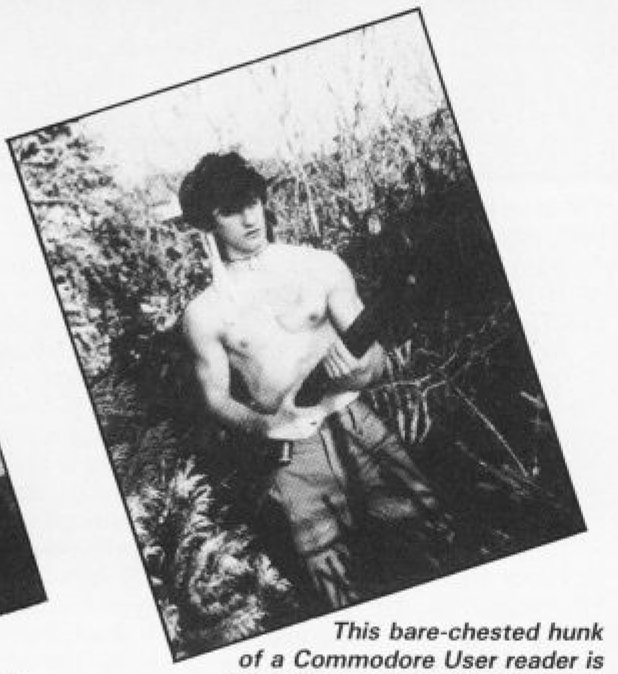
A game that has all the features of its 64 predecessor.



The Winner, step up please Peter Chaplin of West Smethwick and Snog the cat. Well done chaps the games are on the way along with a tin of Gook-flavoured Whiskas.



This terrorist-like Rambo is Asif Lakhanpal of Upper Holloway, in London. Nice one Asif, I particularly like that replica of an M60. It is a replica Asif, isn't it?



This bare-chested hunk of a Commodore User reader is Ellis Harverson of Warminster. A real 'poseur' he is too, according to his brother Adrian who was kind enough to send us this snap. Well, I suppose Sylvester is a bit of a poseur himself and it doesn't seem to have done him much harm.

WINNERS RAMBO LOOKALIKE COMPETITION

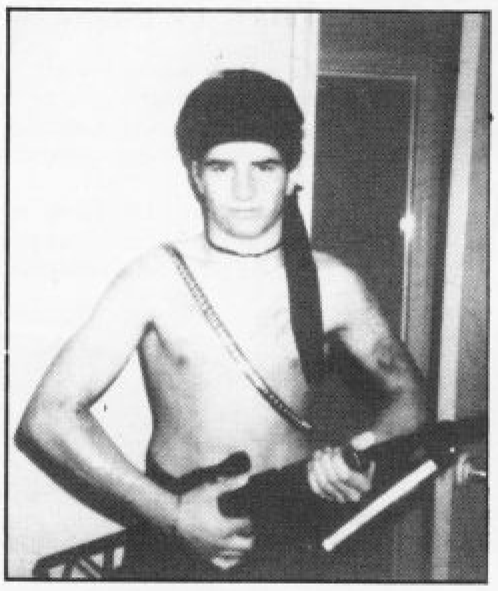
"Don't push me!" OK, OK, I won't, but at least let me tell you about our Rambo lookalike competition — featured in the January issue.

We figured a lot of boring photos would be taken at Christmas. You know the kind I mean — Mum and Dad, and the kids, standing around the Christmas tree, looking down fondly on the new Trivial Pursuit Deluxe set.

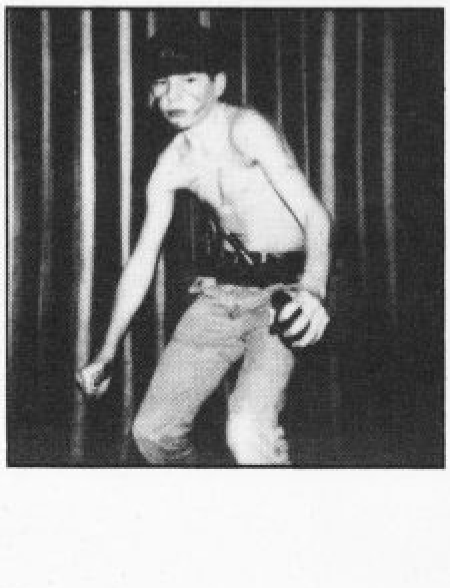
Yuk — we just had to get a bit of life into those snaps so we asked our readers to dress up as Rambo for a chance to win one of thirty pairs of *Rambo* by Ocean and *Commando* and by Elite.

The response was, well, interesting. Dozens of you fancied yourself as Silvester Stallone's double, whipped off your shirts and reached for the instamatic.

Here are some of the winners and before you start writing in we are sorry that there is not enough room here to publish everyone's picture. Maybe next time, in our shortly to be announced Madonna lookalike competition (C'mon you software houses howsabout a Madonna game).



Stephen Oakley wins a copy of Rambo and Commando for his excellent greasy chest and scars. I am not sure what you are doing holding that umbrella though, Stephen.



A close second is Mark Jackson of Hucknall, in Nottingham. Mark strikes a mean pose and was the only entrant clutching a grenade. Nice touch, Mark.

Geoff Capes Competition Results

We had so many entries to our December Geoff Capes competition we had to hire a strongman to carry the mailbags upstairs. Tricky question this time and only a select few got the answer completely right. The three names we wanted were: Brian Jacks, Frank Bruno and Graham Gooch.

Ten lucky winners get to flex their muscles with a pristine copy of Martech's Geoff Capes Strongman game. Congrats to: Matthew Skinner of Bath, Andrew Foster of E Yorkshire, James Banting of Portsmouth, Anthony Hughes of Mid Glamorgan, Michael Robertson of Formby, Marc Hagan of Merseyside, Neil Shepherd of Evesham Adrian Coutes of Bradford, Simon Chambers of London and Christopher Bloomfield of Welling.



Cowboy-speak scrolls up under the pictures.

The number of western games currently available for the 64 mirrors the interest in them in the arcades at the moment. Whilst the quality of software is generally poor in this field, there are some great coin-op jobs about. If you've got a pocket full of change why not pour it into *Express Rider* where you ride a horse alongside a train firing at the travellers? Other titles include, *Gunsmoke*, a Clint Eastwood-style shoot out, or *Bank Panic* and *Hogan's Alley*, both a test of your reactions.

LAW OF THE WEST
Commodore 64/128
US Gold/Accolade
Price: £14.95/disk £9.95/cass

Every so often talented programmers sit down and decide they're going to create a piece of software that's REALLY DIFFERENT, 999 times out of 1000 the results are disappointing. This program isn't the odd one out.

The idea is that as sheriff of Gold Gulch you have to maintain order through a series of 'conversations' with different members of the town's population. Depending on how you handle the chit-chat you may find some of the characters pull a gun on you, in which case you have to respond with a lightning draw and blow the guy (or gal) off the street.

The encounters are depicted on attractively drawn (but motionless) backgrounds. All that moves are the characters you meet and your own right hand and gun, looming large at the left of the picture. The conversation is revealed in five lines of text at the bottom of the screen. The first line reports the words of the townsperson. The next four indicate your possible responses, with the one you select helping dictate how the conversation continues.

This multiple-choice approach means the game can be entirely joystick controlled. The trouble is it doesn't leave much room for skill. Much of the time you don't really have any reason other than idle curiosity to choose one response over another. And after playing the game a few times you're likely to have exhausted the potential of many of the conversations.

That leaves the shooting which, apart from having a nicely animated hand to look at, is also pretty uninteresting. A joystick movement brings the gun out of the holster and miraculously implants a cross-hair cursor on the screen. You aim and fire, so the only point of entertainment is trying to predict when someone's about to draw on you and keeping your reaction time short.

There is quite a nice touch though, when you yourself get shot. The screen goes dark and all you see are bits of text reporting the conversation of other people saying things like: "Bring a doctor!"

Another big bore is that at the end of each conversation a new backdrop has to be loaded into memory. On the cassette version at any rate, this means having to wait for about a minute every other minute. Hardly conducive to getting any momentum or excitement going.

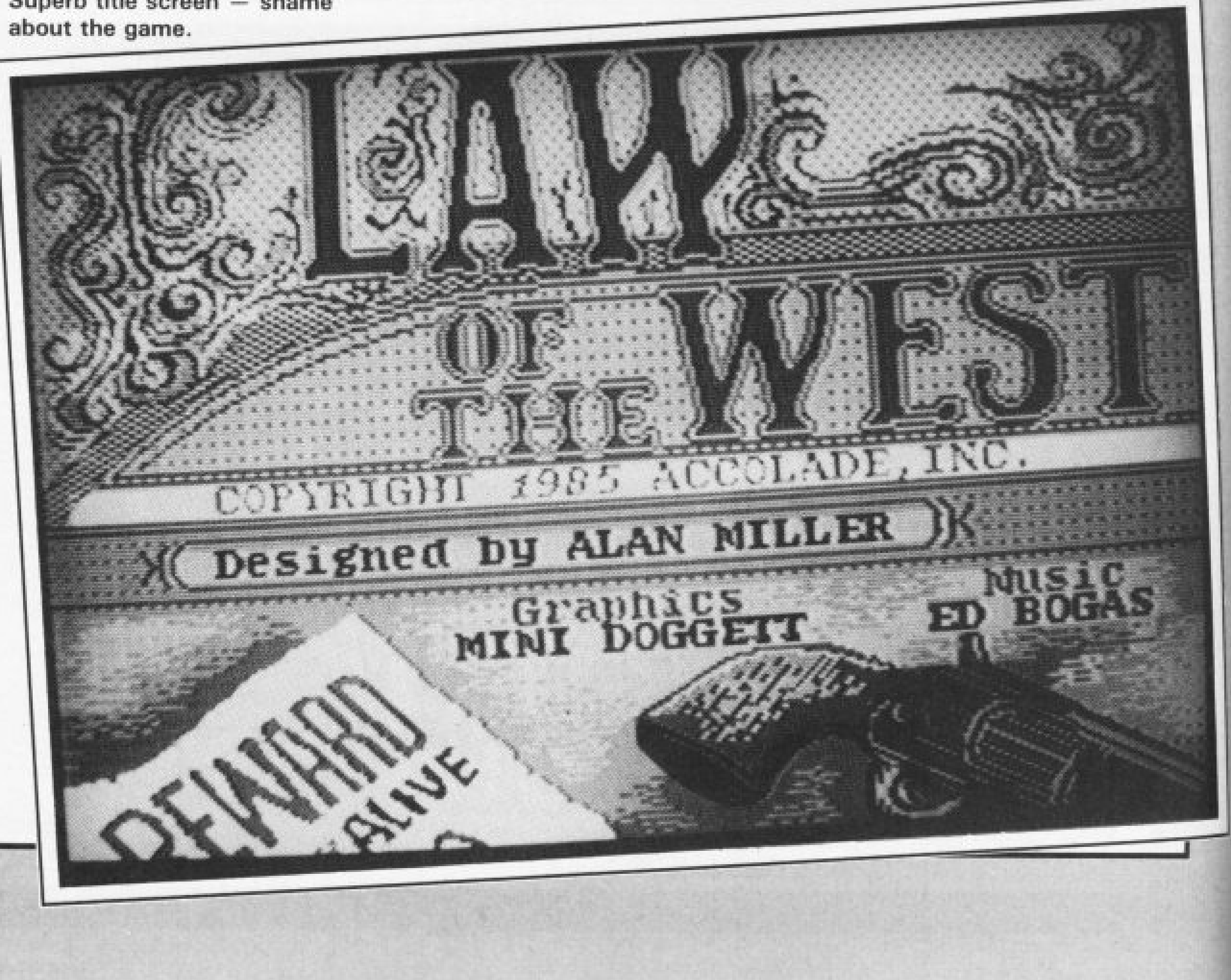
If you can avoid a fatal shooting and make it all the way through the tape to sundown you get a screen which gives you a rating on seven different points including: how well you maintained your authority, the number of crooks you captured, how well you did romantically, the number of bad guys you shot, the number of good guys you shot, etc. This gives you a minor incentive to try again, but only minor.

The game lacks gameplay. Original, yes, absorbing, no.

Chris Anderson

Graphics	★★★★
Sound	★★★
Toughness	★★
Staying Power	★
Value	★★

Superb title screen — shame about the game.




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screenplay

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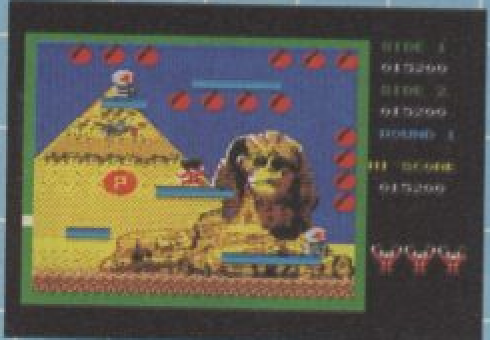
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With an ugly mug like this guy's got its no wonder he disguises himself as Max Headroom. But who is he?



Edison heading for the lift.

Max Headroom

Look — everyone who has written about the *Max Headroom* game so far begins with either an intro or headline that goes something like: M-M-M-Max H-H-H-Headroom. Well I'm not going to, right. There is no way I am going to be accused of being stutterist.

Now on with the game. The tower block you see in the screen shot is the home of Network 23 — ace reporter Edison Carter's employers.

Edison is searching the building for the black box which holds the Max Headroom Personality Generator.

To help him he has to hack into the Maxhunter computer that acts as his ears and eyes in the midnight search.

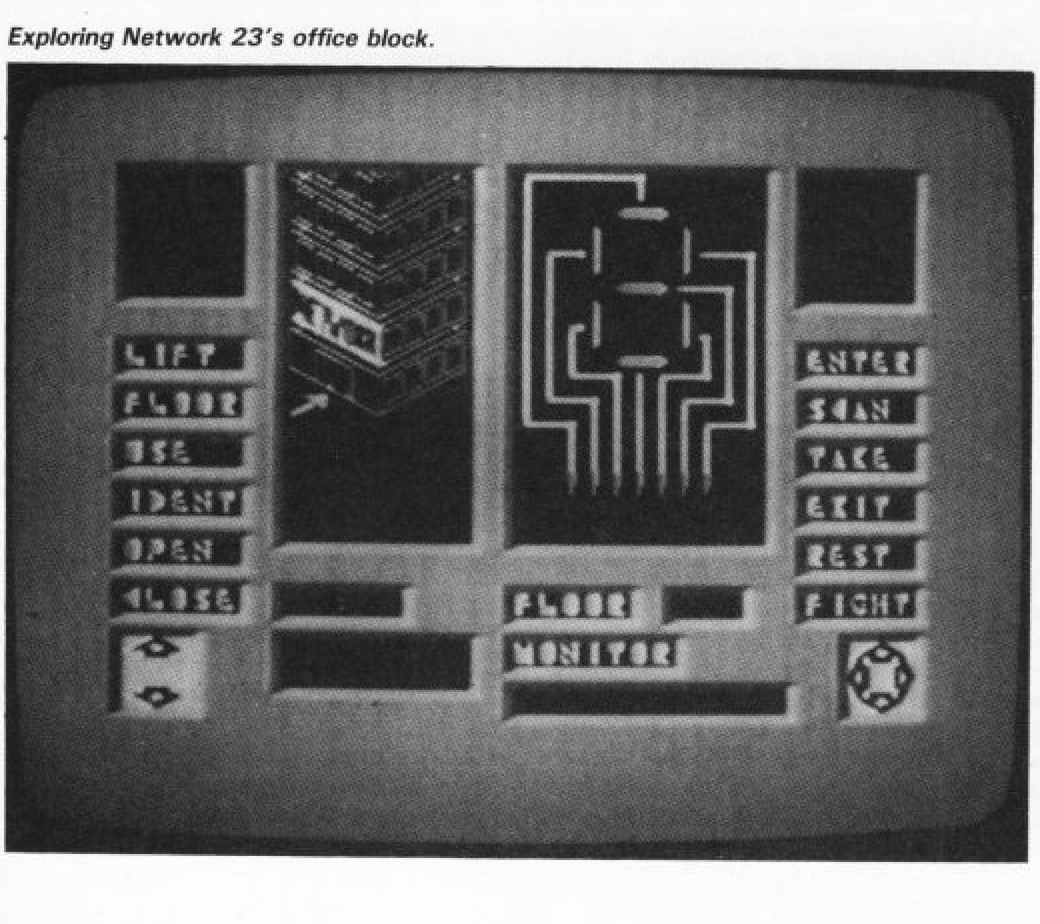
Edison must also establish control over the lifts by typing in code numbers and avoiding the security guards and the hired assassins who work for the evil hacker Bryce, Max's creator.

The game will be on sale in early March and, don't you know it, we'll have a review in the next issue.

Can you tell us who plays Edison Carter in the film for a chance to win a pile of Max goodies including the game and the book.

Entries to Max Comp, Commodore User, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.

Exploring Network 23's office block.



Empire

Whispers are reaching CU of a new Gold Range game from Firebird.

Our spy also tells us that they are talking confidentially about it being the next *Elite*.

The game in question is *Empire* and all Firebird are saying about it is that it's a space trading game.

One of the reasons Firebird appear so tight-lipped about the new Gold games, and everything else for that matter, is that you can never get through to them on the telephone to find anything out.

You would think, wouldn't you, that a company owned by British Telecom would be able to sort out a few spare phone lines. You wouldn't — Oh well! More news on *Empire* (by carrier pigeon possibly) next month.

We've all suffered the horror and boredom of exams, possibly the worst aspect being the torture of revision. Surely the answer has to be in computerised programs that make life easier and refreshingly varied. Hill MacGibbon think so, since they've combined 'O' Level learning software with Pan's invaluable study aids. We asked a group of teachers and pupils their reaction to the packages . . . .

Exam

Maths Teacher's view

This package like the others in the same series contains a revision textbook and two cassettes. The software consists of two parts: diagnostic tests to assess performance and "learning modules".

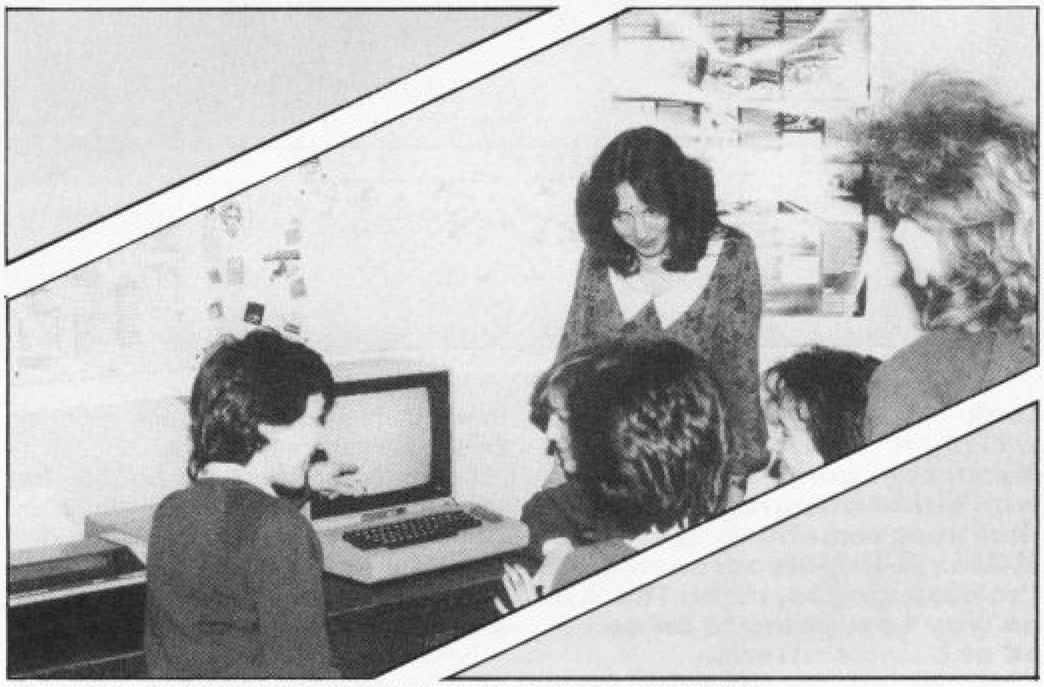
The tests are certainly of an appropriate standard for 'O' Level and may be helpful for revision at the end of a course; however I am not convinced that the power of the computer is utilised at all.

The test questions are contained in an accompanying booklet, the student simply types in the answer (the questions do not appear on the screen). When all the answers are entered the test is marked by the computer and any incorrect answers corrected. I can see nothing here that could not be done in a good workbook.

There are several "learning modules", thirty in all. On the Commodore 64 each has to be loaded separately and always by using the menu program at the beginning of the tape, this is very tedious.

The modules vary in quality, again I feel they do not use the power of the computer. The examples given are too repetitive and do not really test application of the syllabus, a skill vital at 'O' Level. There are some nice diagrams but there is much room for improvement. Personally I would buy the book and not bother with the software.

Colleen Young
Croham Hurst School
S. Croydon



Bad marks for 'O' Level software from Croham Hurst students.

Students' View

My pupils were not impressed with this program at all. Like me they were not impressed with the loading procedures. They found the presentation dull and not always clear. Also, they disliked so many instructions given in the booklet, they felt that more instructions on the screen would make the program easier to use.

If an incorrect answer is given a hint appears on the screen, these were rather variable in quality and several pupils found them no help at all. They would have liked a greater variety of questions, within each module there is very little variety.

They found an incorrect answer in one section which did not do much for their confidence in the program. Another fault they found was that the computer regards "a" and "A" as different answers for multiple choice, this they thought very unfair and quite unneccessary.

Faults like those mentioned above are most off-putting and children lose interest quite quickly even if the program content is useful.

French Teacher's view

The "Pan Course Tutors" package seemed to me a splendid idea since I have frequently recommended the Pan textbook. However, on closer inspection, this package is disappointing.

I was dismayed to find that my answers on the Present, Perfect and Imperfect tense sections were often deemed incorrect, only to be corrected with my original answer! Another problem is the use of accents which is indispensable in French. Duly warned that a missing accent means a wrong answer, I was unable to enter accents successfully using the notation given with the result that I scored 66% on a test which I had answered 100% correctly. Imagine the effect of such errors on a nervous examination candidate. In one case I was given a totally erroneous rulė. Another irritation in this program is the inability to accept an alternative but correct answer.

Sarah Williamson
Croham Hurst School
S. Croydon

Students' View

Linguists are notoriously fussy but my pupils' reactions should also be considered. Most felt that the presentation was good, although in one section pictures were missing and in another illustrated items were unrecognisable. (Time was wasted deciding whether Pierre was fishing or painting!).

The tests themselves were confusing mainly because the questions do not appear on the screen but in the manual. The tests could have been done just as easily on paper.

In my opinion the program does not make a valuable addition to the textbook. The exercises given in the program do not seem to use the potential of the computer.

I doubt the value of a revision course which has not been adequately checked. This is a great shame as the novelty value of the computer would perhaps encourage less motivated pupils.

flop!



'O' Level revision packages reviewed

Physics Teacher's view

This package is based on an excellent revision book, but in practice things were unlikely to proceed so smoothly. For I feel that many of the middle or lower ability candidates will need help from their parents in reading and mastering all the initial instructions in the student guide.

The programs themselves still have a number of faults that need rectifying. A missing negative sign in one of the answers will cause great confusion. But that is nothing to the frustration I felt when I twice had to reload the program after getting trapped in a loop.

The learning modules would be greatly improved if all the necessary data for a question was shown in the screen diagrams — at present, data given at the start frequently disappears by the time you need it.

It would also save the user a great deal of time if he or she could simply move on from one learning module without having to reload the whole program. With the package in its present form its value is limited since a great deal of time is wasted loading the programs.

C.R. Whyatt MSc M Inst P
Head of Physics, Heathfield School
Surrey

Students' View

This is a tale of two packages: a very good revision book with clear, simple accurate instructions; and a slow, badly designed program.

The book is one of the high quality Pan Study Aids and stands alone as an excellent reference for exam revision. It is referred to throughout the software whenever the student is weak in some area of the work. The software, however, was a different story . . . .

The system used old slow loaders — a bit dated in this age of turbos — and due to terrible tape management, each of the dozen or so modules required a complete reload from the beginning of the side!! The programs are also written in Basic which did nothing to compensate for the time already used in loading. The overall effect is that lengthy periods of potential revision time are wasted waiting for the software to load.

Perhaps the most disturbing feature of the software is the existence of bugs in the answers. In one instance, two virtually identical questions have alternately positive and negative results — a surplus minus sign being the cause for concern. Add to this the dull presentation of the software and students becomes VERY discouraged in their work.

Daniel Gilbert

Chemistry Teacher's view

My first gripe about this program is that it takes too long to load and there's no excuse for this, since turbo loaders are now almost universally used. Also, there's too much reference to the question booklet — students will have enough books in front of them without this. I feel the questions could have been put on the computer.

The book itself is quite good but a bit out of date — it's a 1981 edition. It is therefore missing some syllabus elements.

I also found the style of some of the questions confusing, but hints given by the computer were quite good when a question was answered badly.

My other major criticism of the package would be that a student trying to run through several modules has to reload each section of each module individually from the initial menu. If a large number of modules are attempted in one session, this can be a very lengthy process.

A. Andrews
Heathfield School
Surrey

Students' View

As with the other package I reviewed, this suffers from inadequate software support of a good revision book.

The presentation of the questions in this package, however, were confusing, as well as boring. In several places the questions are so badly worded that the student HAS to answer them wrongly in order to understand what is being asked, from the hints supplied.

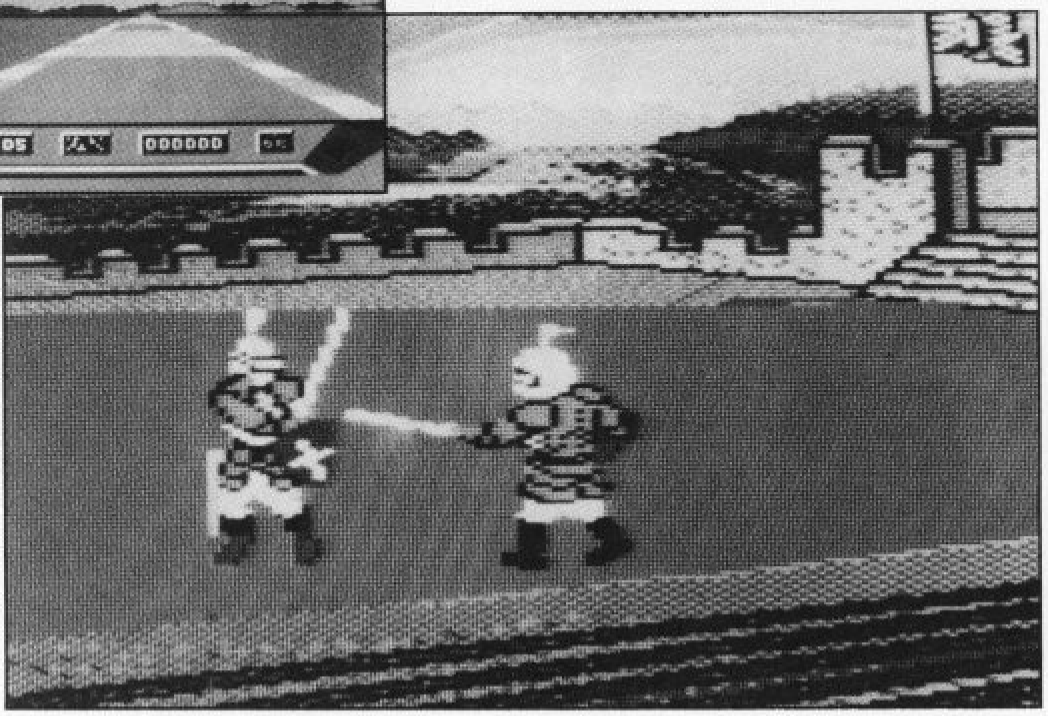
Unforgiveable errors abound, too: in one place while the computer is printing and showing user inputs in lower case it requires the user to enter an upper case answer. If this is not realised, the user can become extremely confused when his answers are wrong despite confidence on his part to the contrary. In another the graphics are illegibly small whilst in another a "rubbish" sprite appears, obscuring part of the 'hints' screen.

As with both packages I used, the disastrous speed of program, loader and filing (i.e. menu) systems occupied more time than the revision usually did.

Daniel Gilbert

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Knight Games

It comes to something when companies start hypeing their next game before coming up with the one they had been promising for the last nine months.

We have become used to having to wait months for the games advertised in the magazines actually appearing in the shops but the delay in the launch of *Elektraglide* from English Software must be close to a record.

Certain magazines previewed the game on the basis of the Atari version four issues ago.

Well it is finally ready to be released. We didn't get it in time to review in this issue but from what we have seen, it does look pretty special.

Set in the future its graphics are reminiscent of *Pole Position* in terms of colours and landscape.

Unlike *Pole Position, Elektra Glide* is a race against the clock game. There are no opponents to get in your way.

But it's no push-over either as there are obstacles — including tunnels and huge balls — that loom in front of you.

Elektra Glide is also the first race game to introduce forks in the road. Imagine it, you are racing at full speed when suddenly you seek a fork. Which way are you to go?

The second game being hyped from the English Software stable is a medieval combat game called *Knight Games.*

This features eight different quests: Sword Fighting, Duelling Axemen, Archery, Quarterstaff Bashing, Crossbow Shooting, Ball and Chain Flailing, Pikestaff Contests.

Knight Games can be played by one or two players and implements moves Fist-style — with different combinations of joystick positions.

Bomb Jack Ghosts and Goblins

Two new arcade conversions are being keyed as you read this at Elite's games workshop in sunny Walsall (*sun — in the Midlands? — Ed*).

Chief bottle washer for Elite, Bernard Dugdale, told CU that they are going to launch *Bomb Jack* in February and *Ghosts and Goblins* in March.

Bomb Jack is a 64 rendition of the moderately popular arcade game in which you play a tiny rodent collecting fruits in order, as you bounce around the screen.

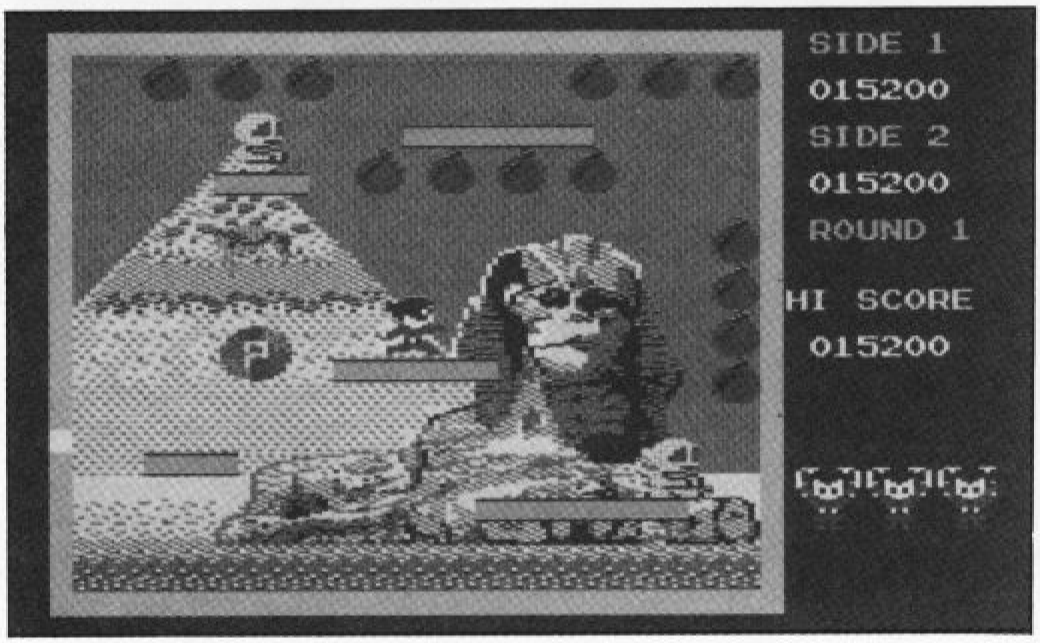
Fans of the arcade original will be well satisfied with the accuracy of the conversion which — as you can see from the screen shot — includes the famous pyramids screen.

If *Bomb Jack* is not quite your cup of tea then *Ghosts and Goblins* may be more to your taste.

This one has been licensed from Capcom — those violent so an so's that coded *Commando*. From a stable like that it has to be good and, if you are fortunate enough to have played it in the arcades, or even more fortunate to have played it in the pub like me, then you will know that it certainly is the business.

You play a knight in shining armour who.has to rescue a fairy maiden from the clutches of an ugly winged demon.

Ok, Ok, so the plot is not that original — but the game is great fun. A shoot 'em up style adventure — where you pick up the items you need as you travel.



The coin-op *Ghosts and Goblins* was so vast that not many gamers were rich enough to master it. This is of course no problem for the home version — where toughness is more a virtue than a handicap.

We will carry a full review of *Bomb Jack* in the next issue and *Ghosts and Goblins* shortly after. Watch this space.


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C-16 COMPETITION

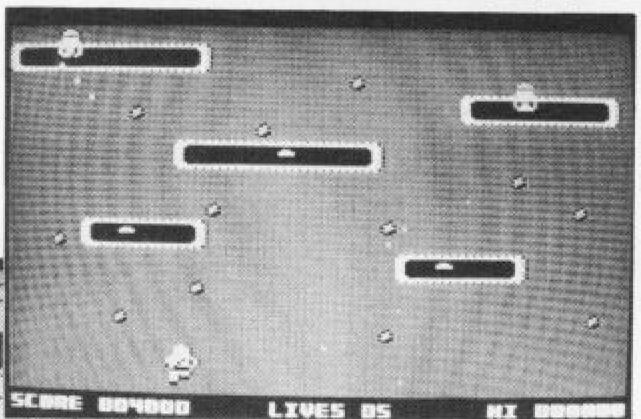
WIN 50 COPIES COMMANDO

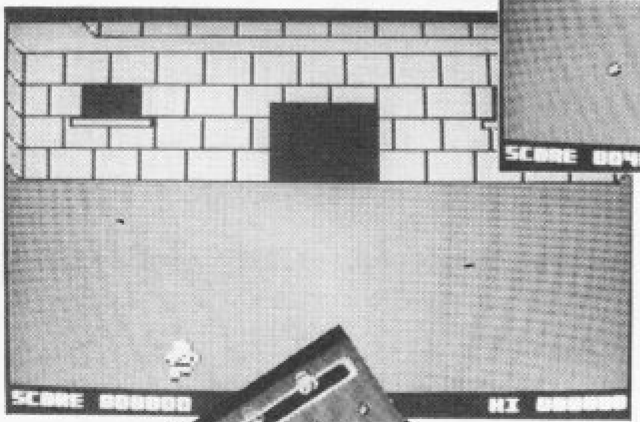
Smash hit coin-op games are pretty few and far between these days. A recent exception was *Commando* from Capcom in which you have to cut down the enemy with an M60 machine gun so that you can return safely to base.

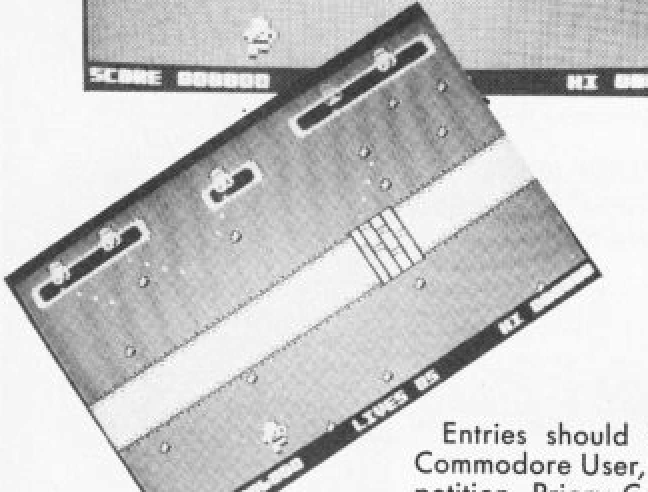
There are also boxes of grenades scattered around the battlefield that are useful to pick up and use for things like taking out enemy pill boxes, armoured cars, and clusters of troops.

You couldn't honestly say that *Commando* takes the art of the computer game on in leaps and bounds but it is undeniably a fast and furious shoot 'em up with great graphics, superb sound and a huge army of fans.

Until now only 64 owners have been able to enjoy this chart-topping arcade conversion. But now it's the turn of C16 and Plus 4 owners to sign up for duty as Elite have converted the game for the baby Commodore.







As you would expect *Commodore User* is first with the story and screen shots — but more than that we also have no less than *FIFTY* copies to be won.

To win your free copy of *Commando* all you have to do is answer the questions in the quiz below, provide a hint or tip, and send off the coupon before March 15th.

1. The motto of the S.A.S. is (a) Who Sues Wins (b) Who Dares Wins or (c) There's nowt as queer as folk, 'appen.
2. The war hero sent back to Vietnam in a recent Hollywood blockbuster was (a) Rambo (b) John Wayne or (c) Michael Heseltine.
3. What is the highest military honour that can be awarded to a Commando in the British Army? (a) The Victoria Cross (b) The George Cross or (c) A mention in dispatches.

Entries should be sent to Commodore User, C-16 Competition, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

Please include with your entry a hint or tip on any C16/Plus 4 game you have played.

Name ....

Address ....

....

....

Telephone number ....

Answers (just write correct letters) ....

My hint or tip is (use separate sheet of paper if you wish) ....

....

....

SOFTWARE GUIDE '86 C-16 and

Put the flags out 'cos here it is, our complete and indispensible guide to all the software currently available for the Commodore 16 and Plus/4. So you thought your poor little machine had nothing to run on it? So you were wrong . . .

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We've had so many letters and phone calls from frustrated 16 and Plus/4 owners about software that we'd better set the record straight:

- Commodore 64 software will NOT run on the Plus/4.
- Yes, you CAN run C-16 software on the Plus/4.
- If you can't find 16 or Plus/4 software in the shops, you can get it mail order from:
  Commodore Softpost — 0536 205555
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d Plus/4

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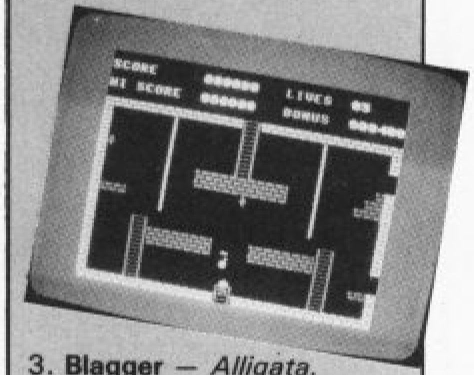
JCL

Plus/4 Compiler	TBA

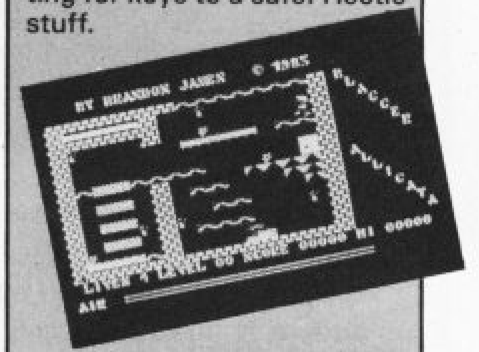
To help make life a little easier for you now we've presented you with such a large choice of 16 and Plus/4 software, we asked Ken McMahon, ace G-Force member, to choose his top five games on the 16. He disappeared for a few days to replay his collection and finally came back with this selection.

1. **Berks III** — *CRL.*
The best of the trilogy. An original and addictive arcade style game, something the 16 is well suited to.

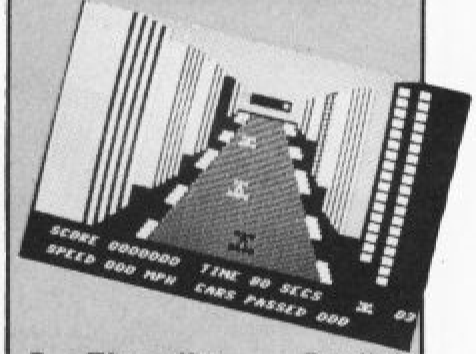
2. **Dark Tower** — *Melbourne House.*
Hectic platform action across 27 screens. Ambitious and impressive.



3. **Blagger** — *Alligata.*
Another slice of platform mania. You play Roger the Dodger a master burglar hunting for keys to a safe. Hectic stuff.



4. **Death Race 16** — *Atlantis*
Still the best racing game for the 16 and a good one too.



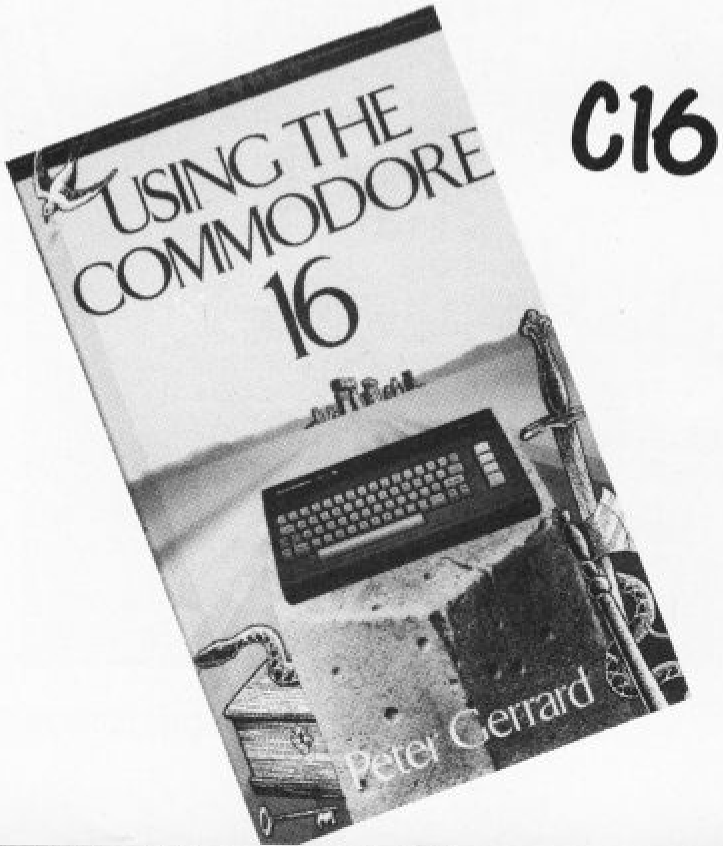
5. **Timeslip** — *English Software.*
Original battle against the clock set in a *Scramble* type scenario. Hellish fun.

These are Ken's current five, but I can't see them staying that way with the amount of new and dramatically improved software we're promised. Elite's *Commando* is just one example.

Arrow for the C16 and Plus/4

You may not like snakes but you'll like this game. Guide the snake (using the cursor keys) so that it bumps into the numbered boxes that appear and disappear. You score points according to the number on the box. But the more you score, the longer the snake gets and you lose your life if it bumps into itself.

```
90 COLOR 0,8,7:COLOR 4,3,4
100 PRINT"[CLR,BLK,CD,RVS]ARROW  "
110 PRINT"[CD]INSTRUCTIONS (Y OR N)?"
112 GETZ$:IFZ$="Y"THEN115
113 IFZ$="N"THEN190
114 GOTO112
115 PRINT"[CD]OKAY, THEN "
120 PRINT"[CD]GUIDE THE MOVING 'SNAKE' WITH THE CU
RSORMOVEMENT KEYS.
140 PRINT"[CD]DON'T HIT THE BOUNDARY (OR YOURSELF)
;"
150 PRINT"..TRY TO HIT THE BOXES FOR POINTS."
160 PRINT"[CD]YOU HAVE 60 SECONDS OF PLAY. GOOD LU
CK!"
170 PRINT"[CD,RVS]HIT ANY KEY TO START"
180 GETZ$:IFZ$=""GOTO180
190 DIMP(255),D(3),V(8),H(8),T(8),R(8):K=.1
200 D(0)=22:D(1)=60:D(2)=62:D(3)=30
210 T9=3072:T6=3599:C1=2048
220 REMSET SCREEN UP
230 PRINT"[CLR,BLK]   SCORE: 0":PRINT"A"
240 FORJ=0TO81:IFPEEK(T9+J)<>1THENNEXTJ
250 L=J:FORJ=T9+LTOT9+2*L-1:POKEJ,81:POKEJ+23*L,81
:POKEJ-1024,2:POKEJ+23*L-1024,2
255 NEXTJ
260 FORJ=T9+2*LTOT9+24*LSTEPL:POKEJ,81:POKEJ+L-1,8
1:POKEJ-1024,2:POKEJ+L-1-1024,2
265 NEXTJ
270 V=5:H=5:V1=0:H1=1:P2=10:D1=2
280 TI$="000000"
290 PRINT"[HOME]";RIGHT$(TI$,2):IFTI>T6GOTO620
300 GETZ$:IFZ$=""GOTO330
303 Z=ASC(Z$):IFZ<>17ANDZ<>157ANDZ<>29ANDZ<>145THE
N330
305 IFZ=17THENZ=0
306 IFZ=157THENZ=1
308 IFZ=29THENZ=2
310 IFZ=145THENZ=3
320 D1=Z:D=Z-1.5:V1=INT(ABS(D))*SGN(D):H1=SGN(D)-V
1
330 V=V-V1:H=H+H1:P=T9+V*L+H
350 P9=PEEK(P):
360 R6=R7:R7=R7+1:IFR7>P2THENR7=0
370 P1=P(R7):P(R7)=P:IFP1<>0THENPOKEP1,32:POKEP1-1
024,7
380 POKEP,D(D1):P1=P(R6):IFP1<>0THENPOKEP1,81:POKE
P1-1024,6
390 IFP9<>32GOTO540
400 IFRND(1)>KGOTO290
410 V%=RND(1)*L/10:P9=86+V%:V9=V(V%):IFV9>0GOTO591
470 V2=INT(RND(1)*20)+3:H2=INT(RND(1)*(L-4))+2
480 FORV3=V2-1TOV2+1:P3=V3*L+T9:FORH3=H2-1TOH2+1:I
FPEEK(P3+H3)<>32GOTO470
```



C16 BOOK COMPETITION

Arrow was taken from Using the Commodore 16, *a new book by Peter Gerrard from Duckworth. The book costs £9.95 but we've got fifteen copies to give away to the winners of this simple competition. Simply answer the three questions below:*

What was the original price of the 16 Starter Pack?
a) £139.99; b) £219.99; c) £12.99
How many colours will the 16 display?
a) 16; b) 121; c) 64
What is the 16's microprocessor called?
a) 1902; b) TED; c) 7501

Answers on a postcard to: C-16 Book Competition, Commodore User, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.



Continued from p. 63

```
490 NEXTH3,V3:V(V%)=V2:H(V%)=H2
500 FORV3=V2-1TOV2+1:P3=V3*L+T9:FORH3=H2-1TOH2+1
510 REM
520 POKEP3+H3,P9:POKEP3+H3-1024,4
530 NEXTH3,V3:T=9*RND(1):P8=V2*L+H2+T9:POKEP8,49+T
:T(V%)=T:R(V%)=P8:GOTO290
540 V%=P9-86:IFV%<0GOTO600
550 P8=R(V%):T=T(V%):P2=P2+T:T$=TI$
560 T=T-1:S=S+1:POKEP8,T+49
570 PRINT"[HOME,9CR]";S
580 FORJ=100TO30STEP-1:NEXT:IFT>=0GOTO560
590 P2=P2+1:TI$=T$:V9=V(V%)
591 FORV3=V9-1TOV9+1:P3=V3*L+T9:H9=H(V%)+P3:FORH3=
H9-1TOH9+1
594 POKEH3,32:POKEH3-1024,7:NEXTH3,V3:V(V%)=0:POKE
R(V%),32:POKER(V%)-1024,7:GOTO290
600 FORJ=1TO1000:NEXT
620 PRINT"[HOME,CD,RVS,BLK]ANOTHER GAME?[OFF] (Y O
R N)?
625 REM
630 GETZ$:IFZ$=""GOTO630
640 IFZ$="Y"THENCLR:GOTO190
650 IFZ$<>"N"GOTO630
660 PRINT"[CLR]BYE ...":END
```

HOW TO USE EASY ENTER

EASY ENTER

COLOUR CODES

[BLK]	— press CTRL and 1
[WHT]	— press CTRL and 2
[RED]	— press CTRL and 3
[CYN]	— press CTRL and 4
[PUR]	— press CTRL and 5
[GRN]	— press CTRL and 6
[BLU]	— press CTRL and 7
[YEL]	— press CTRL and 8

[ORG]	— press CBM key and 1
[BRN]	— press CBM key and 2
[L RED]	— press CBM key and 3
[GR1]	— press CBM key and 4
[GR2]	— press CBM key and 5
[L GRN]	— press CBM key and 6
[L BLU]	— press CBM key and 7
[GR3]	— press CBM key and 8

COMMODORE GRAPHIC CHARACTERS

PRINT WHITE
CURSOR DOWN
REVERSE FIELD ON
HOME
PRINT RED
CURSOR RIGHT
PRINT GREEN
PRINT BLUE
FUNCTION KEY F1
FUNCTION KEY F3
FUNCTION KEY F5
FUNCTION KEY F7

FUNCTION KEY F2
FUNCTION KEY F4
FUNCTION KEY F6
FUNCTION KEY F8
PRINT BLACK
CURSOR UP
REVERSE FIELD OFF
CLEAR
INSERT
PRINT PURPLE
CURSOR LEFT
PRINT YELLOW
PRINT CYAN

OTHER CODES

[CU]	— press 'cursor up' key
[CD]	— press 'cursor down' key
[CL]	— press 'cursor left' key
[CR]	— press 'cursor right' key
[HOM]	— press HOME key
[CLS]	— press CLEAR key
[DEF]	— press INST key (insert)
[REV]	— press RVS ON key (CTRL and 9)
[OFF]	— press RVS OFF key (CTRL and 0)
[SPC]	— press spacebar
[G<key]	— press CBM key with specified key
[G>key]	— press SHIFT key with specified key

EXAMPLES:

[3SPC]	— press spacebar three times
[5CD]	— press 'cursor down' key five times
[G>F]	— press SHIFT key with 'F'



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Demon Breakout – for the Commodore 64/128

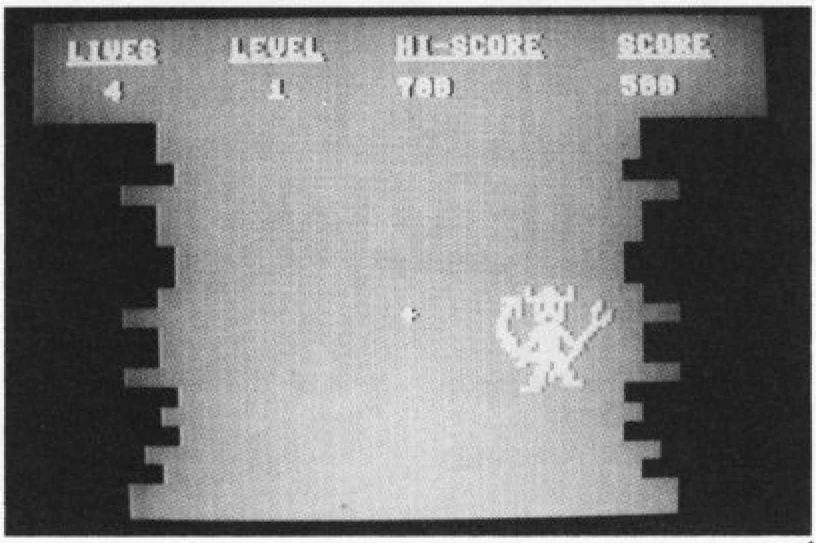
```
1 REM ********************
2 REM ** DEMON BREAKOUT **
3 REM **       BY        **
4 REM **  BOB METCALF    **
5 REM ********************
10 REM ** INITIALISE VARIABLES & **
20 REM ** RE-SEED RANDOM NUMBERS **
30 V=53248:S=54272:HI=0:R=RND(-TI)
40 REM ** CLEAR & COLOUR SCREEN **
50 PRINT"[CLS]";CHR$(5):POKE53280,0:POKE53281,2
60 REM ** INITIALISE SOUND REGISTERS **
70 FOR'=STOS+24:POKEI,0:NEXTI:POKES+24,15
80 REM ** READ SPRITE DATA **
90 FORI=0TO62
100 READSD
110 POKE832+I,SD
120 NEXTI
130 FORI=0TO62
140 READSD
150 POKE896+I,SD
160 NEXTI
170 GOSUB4600
180 REM ** DRAW BACKGROUND **
190 PRINT"[CLS]"
200 FORL=0TO760STEP40
210 R=INT(RND(1)*4)+1
220 FORI=0TO(R+3)
230 POKE1224+L+I,160
240 POKE1263+L-I,160
250 POKE55496+L+I,0
260 POKE55535+L-I,0
270 NEXTI:NEXTL
280 POKE1604,43:POKE55876,1
290 REM ** INITIALISE PLAY-ALTERED **
300 REM **        VARIABLES.        **
310 SC=0:LI=5:HT=0:TS=12:HP=100:LE=1
320 REM ** ERASE SCORES **
330 PRINT"[HOM]";"[3CD]";"[40SPC]"
340 GOSUB4000
350 GOSUB2000
360 REM ** DISPLAY DEMON **
370 FORT=1TO(INT(RND(1)*700)+200):NEXTT
380 R=INT(RND(1)*12)+1
390 ONRGOTO400,410,420,430,440,450,460,470,480,490,500,510
400 X=104:Y=90:GOTO520
410 X=176:Y=90:GOTO520
420 X=226:Y=98:GOTO520
430 X=152:Y=133:GOTO520
440 X=200:Y=133:GOTO520
450 X=96:Y=155:GOTO520
460 X=226:Y=155:GOTO520
470 X=152:Y=178:GOTO520
480 X=200:Y=178:GOTO520
490 X=120:Y=205:GOTO520
500 X=176:Y=205:GOTO520
510 X=226:Y=205:GOTO520
520 POKEV+0,X:POKEV+1,Y
530 R=INT(RND(1)*4)+1
540 IFR=1THENPOKE2040,13:POKEV+39,7
550 IFR=2THENPOKE2040,14:POKEV+39,7
560 IFR=3THENPOKE2040,13:POKEV+39,3
570 IFR=4THENPOKE2040,14:POKEV+39,3
580 POKEV+21,1
590 REM ** READ JOYSTICK **
600 FORI=1TOTS
610 IF(PEEK(56320)AND31)=14THEND=-40:GOTO710
620 IF(PEEK(56320)AND31)=13THEND=40:GOTO710
630 IF(PEEK(56320)AND31)=11THEND=-1:GOTO710
640 IF(PEEK(56320)AND31)=10THEND=-41:GOTO710
650 IF(PEEK(56320)AND31)=9THEND=39:GOTO710
660 IF(PEEK(56320)AND31)=7THEND=1:GOTO710
670 IF(PEEK(56320)AND31)=6THEND=-39:GOTO710
680 IF(PEEK(56320)AND31)=5THEND=41:GOTO710
690 NEXTI
700 GOTO800
710 D1=D
720 GOSUB3000
730 REM * MOVE MISSILE & CHECK FOR HIT *
740 FORI=1TO9
750 POKE1604+D1,81:POKE55876+D1,5
760 POKE1604+D1,32
770 IFPEEK(53279)AND1=1THEN860
780 D1=D1+D:NEXTI
790 REM ** MISS DEMON **
800 POKEV+21,0
810 IFR=1THEN350
820 GOSUB4500
830 LI=LI-1:IFLI=0THEN1060
840 GOTO350
```

EASY ENTER

by Bob Metcalf

Forget the title, this isn't one of those bouncing ball, hole in wall games. Much more original than that – it's all about ghostbusting.

Full instructions appear on screen but here's a taster: you've got to zap the devils and ghouls before they can get out of the dungeon. Careful though, you lose a life if you hit the yellow demon with the pitchfork. Sound and good use of sprites make this a neat little piece of programming.




```
850 REM ** HIT DEMON **
860 POKEV+39,5:POKEV+23,1:POKEV+29,1
870 IFR=1THENPOKEV+39,1:GOSUB4500:GOTO890
880 GOSUB3500
890 POKEV+21,0:POKEV+23,0:POKEV+29,0
900 IFR=1THEN830
910 S_=SC+HP:HT=HT+1
920 REM * EVERY TEN HITS ADD 500     *
930 REM * POINTS BONUS AND REDUCE    *
940 REM * TIME OF DEMON ON SCREEN    *
950 REM * ALSO RING BELL & INCREASE  *
960 REM * POINTS/DEMON (MAX 500)
970 IFHT<10THEN350
980 HT=0:SC=SC+500:HP=HP+100:TS=TS-2:LE=LE+1
990 REM ** LIMIT DIFFICULTY LEVEL **
1000 IFHP>500THENHP=500
1010 IFTS<4THENTS=4
1020 IFLE>5THENLE=5
1030 GOSUB4000
1040 GOTO350
1050 REM ** CHECK HI-SCORE **
1060 IFSC>HITHENHI=SC
1070 GOSUB2000
1080 REM ** NEW GAME? & CLEAR DISPLAY **
1090 PRINT"[HOM]";"[10CD]";TAB(15);"GAME OVER."
1100 GOSUB2500
1110 PRINT"[HOM]";"[10CD]";TAB(15);"[10SPC]"
1120 PRINT"[CD]";TAB(11);"[18SPC]"
1130 GOTO310
1990 REM ** DISPLAY & UPDATE SCORE. **
2000 PRINT"[HOM]"
2010 PRINT"[2SPC]LIVES[4SPC]LEVEL[4SPC]HI-SCORE[4SPC]SCORE"
2020 PRINT"[2SPC][5G<T][4SPC][5G<T][4SPC][8G<T][4SPC][5G<T]"
2030 PRINTTAB(3);LI;TAB(12);LE;TAB(19);HI;TAB(31);SC
2040 RETURN
2490 REM ** 'PRESS FIRE BUTTON' **
2500 PRINT"[CD]";TAB(11);"PRESS FIRE BUTTON."
2510 IF(PEEK(56320)AND31)=15THEN2530
2520 GOTO2510
2530 RETURN
2990 REM ** DISINTEGRATOR SOUND **
3000 POKES+5,144:POKES+6,0
3010 POKES,46:POKES+1,253:POKES+4,129
3020 FORT=1TO200:NEXTT
3030 POKES+4,128
3040 RETURN
3490 REM ** DEMON HIT SOUND **
3500 POKES+5,10:POKES+6,139
3510 POKES,121:POKES+1,100:POKES+4,129
3520 POKES+4,128
3530 FORT=1TO500:NEXTT
3540 RETURN
3990 REM ** BONUS SOUND **
4000 POKES+5,15:POKES+6,137
4010 POKES,60:POKES+1,50:POKES+4,33
4020 POKES+4,32
4030 RETURN
4490 REM ** DEMON ESCAPE SOUND **
4500 POKES+5,15:POKES+6,137
4510 POKES,195:POKES+1,16:POKES+4,33
4520 POKES+4,32
4530 RETURN
4590 REM ** INSTRUCTIONS **
4600 PRINT"************ DEMON BREAKOUT ************"
4610 PRINT" INVISIBLE EVIL DEMONS HAVE BEEN"
4620 PRINT" IMPRISONED IN A FIERY DUNGEON."
4630 PRINT" UNFORTUNATELY ONE OF THEIR ALLIES HAS"
4640 PRINT" BLASTED A HOLE IN THE DUNGEON WALL AND"
4650 PRINT" THE DEMONS MAKE AN ESCAPE BID."
4660 PRINT" YOU CONTROL AN INVISIBLE DISINTEGRATOR"
4670 PRINT" CANNON WHICH IS MOUNTED AT THE CENTRE"
4680 PRINT" OF THE HOLE AND YOUR JOB IS TO PREVENT"
4690 PRINT" THE ESCAPE OF THE DEMONS BY ZAPPING"
4700 PRINT" THEM.TO HELP YOU IN YOUR TASK A"
4710 PRINT" VISIBILITY BEAM IS DIRECTED AT THE"
4720 PRINT" HOLE WHICH ENABLES YOU TO SEE THE"
4730 PRINT" DEMONS AS THEY TRY TO ESCAPE.WHEN YOU"
4740 PRINT" HIT A DEMON HE TURNS GREEN.IF FIVE"
4750 PRINT" DEMONS ESCAPE YOU ARE OVERPOWERED"
4760 PRINT" AND KILLED."
4770 PRINT"[CD]";TAB(7);"USE A JOYSTICK IN PORT 2."
4780 GOSUB2500
4790 PRINT"[CLS]"
4800 PRINTTAB(9);"***** WARNING! *****"
4810 PRINT"[CD] DO NOT SHOOT THE LITTLE YELLOW DEVILS"
4820 PRINT" (THE ONES WITH THE TAIL AND FORK) AS"
4830 PRINT" THEY WILL ABSORB THE POWER OF YOUR"
4840 PRINT" DISINTEGRATOR AND ESCAPE!"
4850 PRINT"[CD][4SPC]LEVEL 1 DEMON ------ 100 POINTS."
4860 PRINT"[CD][4SPC]LEVEL 2 DEMON ------ 200 POINTS."
4870 PRINT"[CD][4SPC]LEVEL 3 DEMON ------ 300 POINTS."
4880 PRINT"[CD][4SPC]LEVEL 4 DEMON ------ 400 POINTS."
4890 PRINT"[CD][4SPC]LEVEL 5 DEMON ------ 500 POINTS."
4900 PRINT"[CD]BONUS EVERY 10 DEMONS ------ 500 POINTS."
4910 PRINT"[2CD]AIM WITH JOYSTICK-THEN HIT FIRE BUTTON."
4920 GOSUB2500
4930 RETURN
5000 REM ** DEVIL SPRITE DATA **
5010 DATA2,49,0,2,121,0,123,255,0
5020 DATA56,180,4,104,180,12,104,252,9
5030 DATA192,204,11,192,120,14
5040 DATA192,252,24,225,254,48
5050 DATA113,251,96,115,121,192
5060 DATA62,120,192,31,253,128
5070 DATA7,255,0,12,110,0,0,238,0
5080 DATA0,223,0,1,211,0
5090 DATA1,195,192,7,128,0
5100 REM ** GHOUL SPRITE DATA **
5110 DATA16,0,8,24,0,24,8,0,16
5120 DATA12,60,48,6,126,96,3,255,192
5130 DATA1,255,128,1,255,128,5,153,160
5140 DATA7,153,224,3,255,192,7,231,224
5150 DATA5,231,160,1,195,128,0,255,0
5160 DATA0,165,0,0,129,0,0,255,0
5170 DATA0,126,0,0,60,0,0,24,0
READY.
```

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THE NEW GENERATION OF BACKUP METHODS HAS ARRIVED

"Freeze Frame" is the product that '64 owners have been waiting for. At the touch of a switch "Freeze Frame" will take control of your computer and freeze the program in memory, allowing you to **SAVE it to tape or disc**. The uses are endless, but typical applications are . . .

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DISC TO TAPE: Memory resident disc programs can be backed up onto tape. (Saved at turbo speed.)

DISC TO DISC: It is possible to make a self contained back up of disc based programs that will both **load at high speed** and **allow the rest of the disc to be used as normal**.

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In fact "Freeze Frame" is the **ultimate utility**, it works on the program in memory and allows you to make a back up of that program onto tape or disc. The beauty being that the saved version is fast loading and in the case of disc backups no longer has drive damaging DOS errors. The process is **completely automatic** no knowledge of BASIC or machine language is required, just follow the prompts and the simple instructions for **amazing results**.

"Freeze Frame" is a hardware "device" that plugs into the cartridge port of the '64. It does **NOT** dump the entire contents of memory, just the **working program and parameters**. Programs converted run **independently** of the hardware. It is also compatible with the "128" in '64 mode and 1570 disc drive. In tests "Freeze Frame" has proved 100% successful with software tested.

ONLY £39.95

WARNING: Don't be misled by other adverts, if you want to transfer turbo load programs to disc, software only utilities are inadequate. They suffer from a variety of drawbacks including poor success rate, awkward to use, greedy on disc space and overpricing.



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Computer magic

This month, resident magician Phil Cornes has conjured up another selection of programming tricks and tips for the 64. But he's already started sifting through the little gems you sent him last month. Remember, we're offering a great Commodore User Tshirt to anyone who's magical offering Phil finds worthy of publication.

Trace your program

Very few programs written actually work first time (well, mine don't anyway) and one of the most difficult tasks is finding out exactly what route the interpreter takes through the program code. It occurred to me that it would be very useful if Basic could be made to list out the line number of each program line as the statements on each line were executed.

The following program stores a machine-code routine at address 49152 that does just this, printing line numbers on the screen as the statements of a Basic program are executed.

To use the facility, RUN the program below to save the routine in memory and then load up the program you want to trace. The trace facility itself can be toggled on and off with the statement: **SYS 49152.**

The way that this program works means that it cannot be easily relocated, so it has to be used at address 49152 as given.

```
10 FOR C=49152 TO 49200
20 READ B : POKE C,B : NEXT C
30 DATA 120,173,8,3,174,28,192
40 DATA 141,28,192,142,8,3,173
50 DATA 9,3,174,29,192,141,29
60 DATA 192,142,9,3,88,96,76
70 DATA 30,192,165,157,208,249,169
80 DATA 32,32,210,255,166,57,165
90 DATA 58,32,205,189,76,27,192
```

Program Trace Listing

Control your cursor

One very frustrating omission in the Commodore 64 Basic concerns the lack of a keyword designed to enable positioning of the cursor anywhere on the screen. Without such a facility, the design and production of friendly screen layout is very difficult and tedious.

The following short machine-code program is designed to overcome this problem by providing a SYS call which allows you to specify an X and Y screen co-ordinate pair in the range 0-39 and 0-24 respectively. The text cursor will then be moved to the specified co-ordinate ready for execution of the next PRINT statement. This is usually called a PRINT AT command. The format of the AT(X,Y) statement is as follows: **SYS 49152, X,Y** where X and Y are the required co-ordinates, which can be any valid numeric expressions.

Although the routine starts at address 49152 here, it is completely relocatable and can thus be placed anywhere in memory without alteration. Obviously, if you relocafe the program you will change the SYS number to the routine's new start address.

```
10 FOR C=49152 TO 49184
20 READ B : POKE C,B : NEXT C
30 DATA 32,253,174,32,158,183,224
40 DATA 40,144,5,162,14,76,55
50 DATA 164,138,72,32,253,174,32
60 DATA 158,183,224,25,176,239,104
70 DATA 168,24,76,240,255
```

Print AT(X,Y) listing

Send your magic gems to: Computer Magic, Commodore User, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

Get rid of READY

We all know that on the 64, the commands for listing a program to the printer are as follows: **OPEN 4,4: CMD 4 : LIST.**

If you do this, you will find that the word READY appears after the end of the listing, even though it is not part of the program. The reason for this annoying extra output is because the CMD command re-routes the normal output produced by LIST and PRINT so that it goes to a file or, as in this case, a printer. As READY is normally output to the screen on LISTing a program, it is also sent to the printer after CDM 4. The READY message is treated by the 64 as though it were an error message, produced to show that no errors have occurred.

It seemed to me, therefore, that getting rid of the READY on LISTing to the printer might be achieved by suppressing all error messages altogether.

The following program listing stores a machine-code program which can toggle the error message output on and off. After running the program (which is relocatable), the statement: **SYS 49152** will toggle the suppression of error messages on and off.

```
10 FOR C=49152 TO 49178
20 READ B : POKE C,B : NEXT C
30 DATA 173,0,48,174,25,192,141
40 DATA 25,192,142,0,48,173,1
50 DATA 48,174,26,192,141,26,192
60 DATA 142,1,48,96,131,164
```

No errors listing.

Disk Head Cleaner

Here is a program specially for owners of the 1541 disk drive. After lots of use it becomes a good idea to buy a disk drive head cleaning disk to clean off any deposits of dust or dirt from the sensitive disk reading and writing heads.

The instructions on these cleaning disks usually say that you should arrange to use the cleaner in the drive with the heads loaded (ie red light on) for about 30 seconds. The only problem is that there are no standard ways of keeping the disk spinning for anything like this length of time.

The following program overcomes this problem by sending a special sequence of commands to the disk drive to keep it busy while the head cleaner does its job.

To use the program, you should just enter it into the 64 then insert the cleaning disk and execute the program. The disk drive should then start up. When the cleaner has been going long enough, press and hold the space bar until the drive stops.

```
10 OPEN 15,8,15 : OPEN 2,8,2,"#"
20 PRINT #15, "UA:";2;0;1;0
30 GET A$ : IF A$<>"" THEN 20
40 CLOSE 2 : CLOSE 15
```

Head cleaner listing

Append Files

On most computers it is a good idea, when you start programming seriously, to save a set of programs containing useful routines. The routines can then be appended onto the end of any program you are writing that requires the use of them. Sadly, on the Commodore 64 this cannot be done as no append facility has been provided in the Basic — until now.

If you run the following program it will store a machine-code routine in memory, starting at address 49152. The routine provides the facility to append a Basic program from tape or disk onto the end of any Basic program already in memory. The routine is completely relocatable so it can be moved if necessary without changing the code.

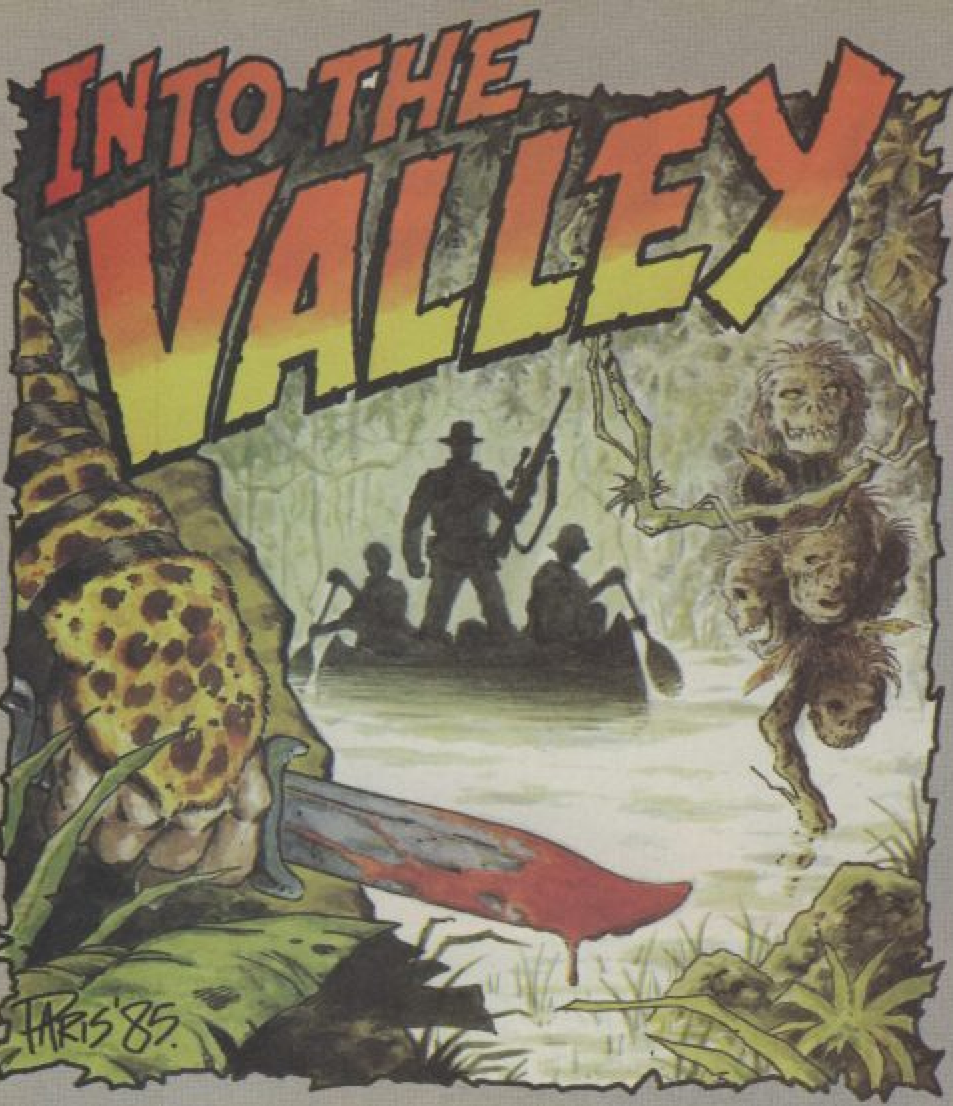
Before using the routine you should make sure that the line numbers in the two programs do not overlap or it might create problems as this program performs an append function and not a merge.

To use the routine, you just type: **SYS 49152, "FILENAME"** for tape use, or: **SYS 49152, "FILENAME",8** for use on a disk file where FILENAME is the name of the files to append.

```
10  FOR C=49152 TO 49230
20  READ B : POKE C,B : NEXT C
30  DATA 32,121,0,32,253,174,169
40  DATA 0,133,10,32,212,225,165
50  DATA 43,72,165,44,72,56,165
60  DATA 45,233,2,133,43,165,46
70  DATA 233,0,133,44,169,0,133
80  DATA 185,166,43,164,44,32,213
90  DATA 255,176,14,134,45,132,46
100 DATA 32,51,165,104,133,44,104
110 DATA 133,43,96,170,201,4,208
120 DATA 5,164,186,136,240,206,104
130 DATA 133,44,104,133,43,24
140 DATA 108,0,3
```

File Append Listing


DYNAMITE!
HOT
RASPUTIN
FIREBIRD
HOT
RUNESTONE
FIREBIRD
HOT
gerry the germ
GOES BODY POPPIN
FIREBIRD
HOT
COSTA CAPERS
FIREBIRD
HOT
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BY JOHN RANSLEY

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Melbourne House
Price: £15.95

The Hobbit still probably holds the record for being the world's biggest-selling adventure ever. So reviewing **Lord of the Rings** isn't so much a question of assessing a sequel as meeting the heir to a legend.

Prising open the weighty package (it includes a paperback copy of Tolkien's 529-page novel, *The Fellowship of the Ring* — the first in the trilogy that forms the basis of this game) you feel a little like Indiana Jones peering into the Lost Ark of the Covenant. The first nice surprise is that you're getting not one but actually *three* self-contained adventures for your £15.95.

The first is a beginner's game — a cut-down version of one of the full adventures that nevertheless incorporates all the main locations, objects and characters. The big plus is that calling for HELP whenever a problem is encountered produces a useful hint. Otherwise, it is much the same in looks and play characteristics as the two full-blooded, HELPless adventures that make up the trio.

It was *The Hobbit*, aided and abetted to some extent by *Twin Kingdom Valley*, that broke the mould of text adventures when it first colourfully breathed life into millions of screen pixels back in 1983, and so it is natural to make *The Lord of the Rings'* visual appeal the first point of comparison with its predecessor.

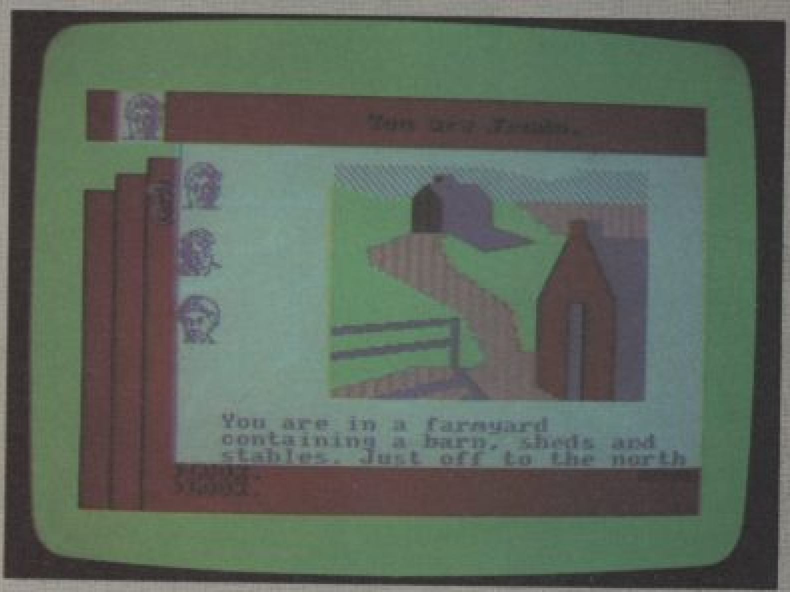
The running screen display comprises three overlapping rectangles with a description and occasional graphic representation of one's current location appearing in the foreground. The borders of the subordinate rectangles hold the images of your travelling companions, which move from the hindmost border to the foremost, and then back again, according to their proximity to the character you have assumed.

First impressions are that *TLR* is very much more textual than *The Hobbit*, sometimes using up two scrolling screenfuls of text to describe a single location. The graphics are satisfactory but they do not mark any significant advance over those presented in *The Hobbit*.

Still, faintly disappointing graphics should not detract from *TLR's* excellence in so many other respects. Philip Mitchell's renowned Inglish parser seems to have been refined still further to permit even more effortless exploration of Middle Earth using commands as simple or as complex as one likes. Its 800-word vocabulary can cope with conventional commands such as EXAMINE THE RING or CLIMB THE TREE without blinking a cursor. But it's more fun still to start lacing your sentences with prepositions such as in ATTACK THE GUARD WITH THE SWORD AND TAKE THE SWORD FROM THE TABLE. A single entry could be composed of several such sentences, punctuated with commas and full stops as with ordinary English, up to a maximum of 128 characters long.

Another technique pioneered in *The Hobbit* and happily contnued in *TLR* is the ability to converse more or less naturally with your travelling companions and other characters, and even to instruct them to take certain actions. For example, one can SAY TO MERRY "GIVE THE ORC THE EMERALD" — or in a shorthand version of the same kind of command, SAM "GIVE MAP TO FRODO". Intelligent and apt use of the SAY command or its derivatives is absolutely crucial to your successful completion of this adventure, since many situations rely on a form of esprit de hobbits rather than individual action by the character you choose to play. Just don't expect others always to obey your edicts — the inhabitants of Middle Earth have minds and allegiances of their own.

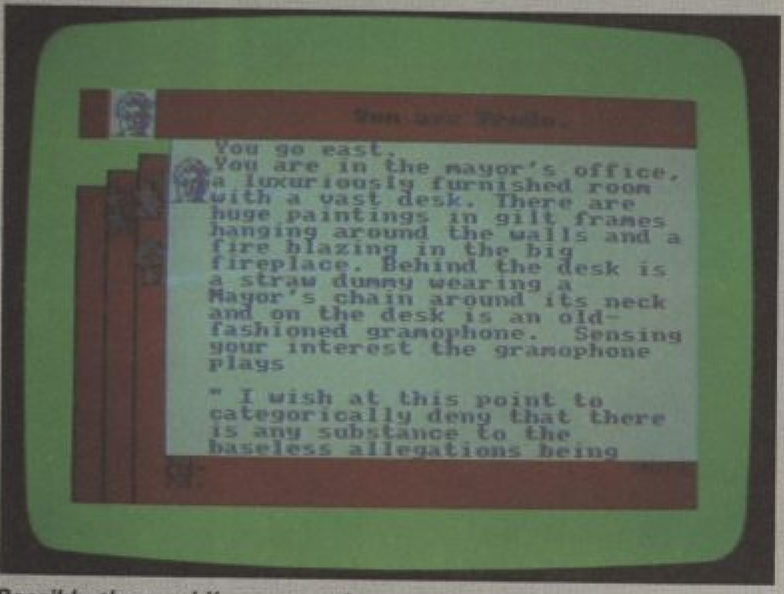
A quite surrealistic variation on this theme is that, having once chosen whether to assume the persona of FRODO,



A vignette of each of the characters you assume remains on view at the top of the screen while portraits of your travelling companions move in and out of the main illustrations.



Graphics are kept simple but at least they are always quickly drawn and colourful.



Possibly the world's most verbose graphic adventure. TLR frequently takes up a couple of screenfuls of text.

MERRY, SAM or PIPPIN at the beginning of each game, one can at any time switch to being another character with the simple command BECOME MERRY. You'd be well advised to explore the adventure in a single rôle before calling this facility into use — though you could find it invaluable if, for example, you, as FRODO, feel compelled to sacrifice one of your compatriots in attempting a rather dangerous action! More practically, one can by this means split up the original party and have individual members of the quartet separately travelling around different parts of the Shire, for example, and testing the challenges and conditions to be found there.

As in all microadventuring, you must map your travels and, since *TLR* permits movements to eight points of the compass, you'll find it best to plot your progress on a grid of hexagonals. It gets even more interesting when you call up the option to track a character, such as FOLLOW GREEN KNIGHT without knowing in which direction he is going. You are also bound to become involved in combat, and here it is necessary to specify both the weapon and your victim, as in KILL WARG WITH AXE.

Wounds slow one's progress, as will weariness and lack of food. So take sustenance wherever you can find it, and don't forget to REST now and then. Other key commands always worth trying include LOOK, EXAMINE and WAIT. You can also check your SCORE at any point, PAUSE the game (which is quite different from the command WAIT), check your INVENTORY, and SAVE a particular game to tape before either attempting a risky action or powering down for the night.

When you have finally mastered your first quest, you may perhaps choose to switch tapes and encounter the Black Riders, the orcs of Moria, the dreaded realm of Angmar and of course the evil Sauron all over gain in the second, self-contained full adventure, possibly taking time to dip into *The Fellowship of The Ring* meantime to give you some more clues to your best strategy.

Overall, *The Lord of The Rings* does more than serve as a worthy sequel to *The Hobbit*, for it has a character and depth all of its own.

Attention to detail, brilliant parser logic, character interaction and the sheer potential for hours and hours of absorbing entertainment, make The Lord of The Rings a totally irresistible addition to the ranks of all-time micro-adventure classics.

Riding out to a new megaventure — the hobbit-hating Black Riders.



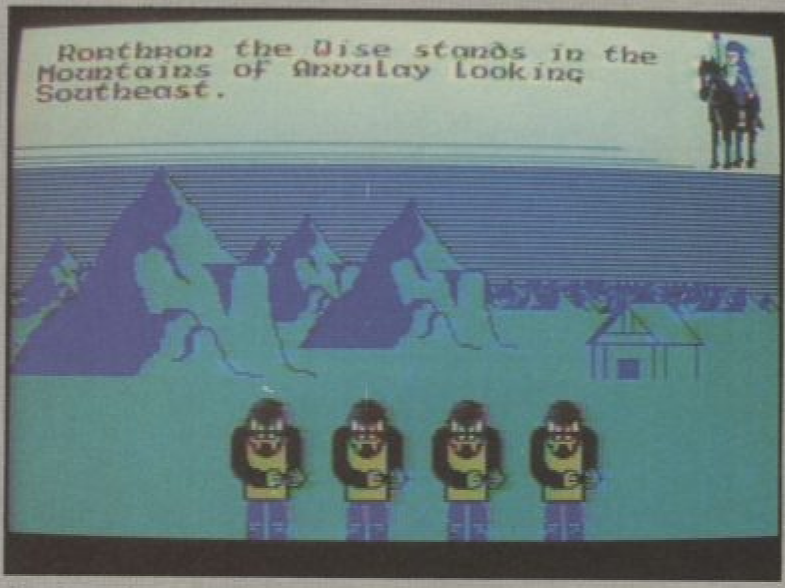
Graphics	★★★★
Literary Merit	★★★★★
Intelligence	★★★★
Toughness	★★★★
Value	★★★★★

Doomdark's Revenge
GrA
Beyond
Price: £9.95

No one has ever come close — and perhaps never will — to emulating Mike Singleton's genius with graphics manipulation in his superb strategy-cum-adventure game The Lords of Midnight, which was a huge hit on the Spectrum but — perhaps because of the delay in its release — failed to make anything like the same impression when the C64 version finally appeared. By then, Beyond weren't too fussed anyway, as they were enjoying another success with the spectrum version of the sequel, **Doomdark's Revenge** — and a Commodore implementation of that title, though frequently promised, seemed itself doomed never to sizzle the 64's circuitry.

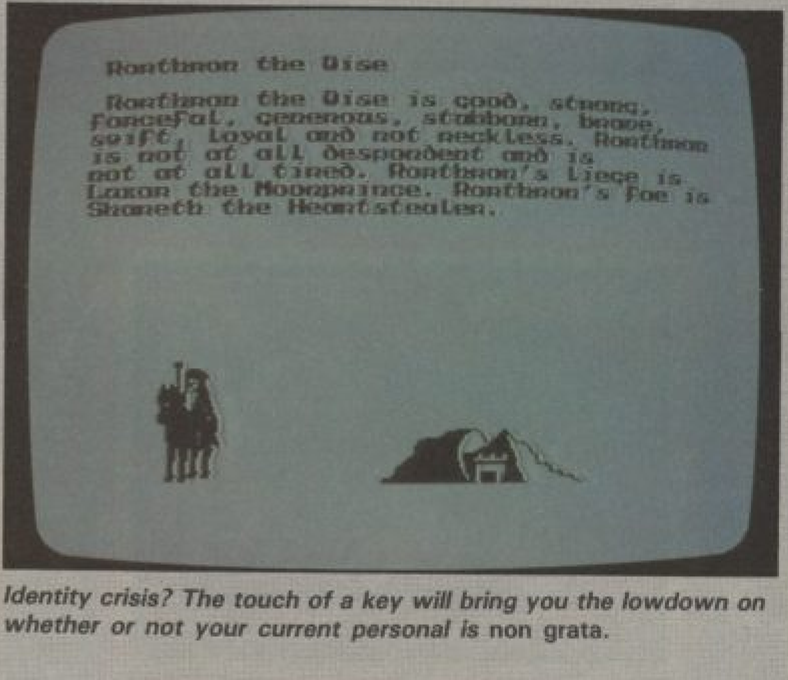
But now it seems that British Telecom's takeover of Beyond (and perhaps the generally dismal reception given to Superman) has prompted a rethink with the result that *Doomdark's Revenge* for the 64 has at last arrived — and it's looking very, very good.

If you've not played *Lords of Midnight*, it's necessary to explain that it differs from conventional adventures in that any of the available actions can be taken by just a single keypress, though the response always takes the form of text set against one of the splendid landscapes of Icemark that number literally thousands. Indeed, one can at any location take a 360° view by tapping the keys numbered 1 to 8 in sequence, and then move in any of eight directions.

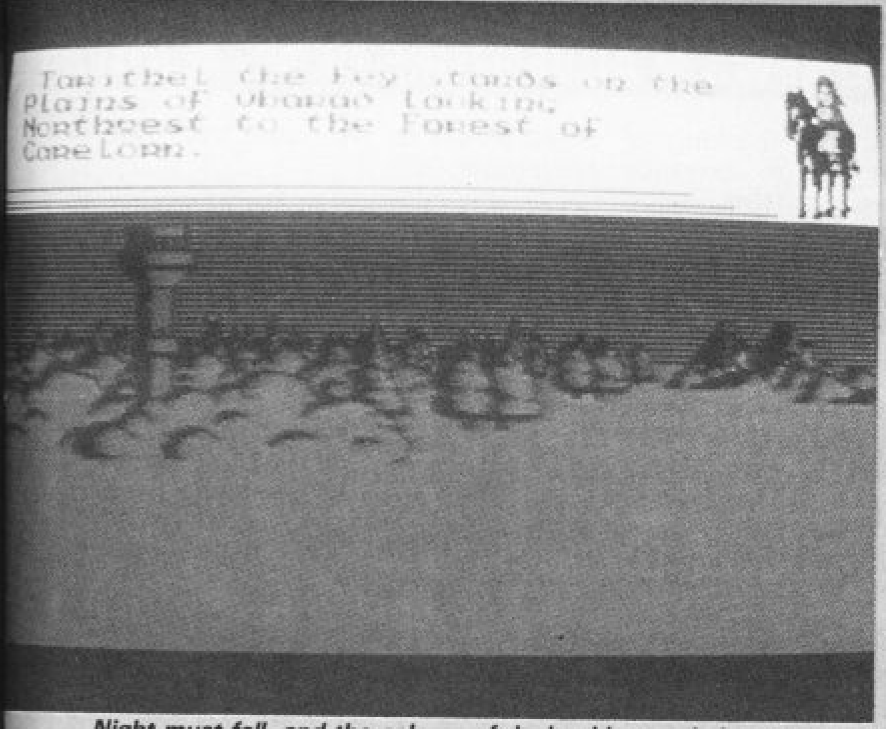


Rorthorn the Wise encounters a fearsome foursome in the mountains.

In this further confrontation with the evil witchking Doomdark and the unassailable Shareth the Heartstealer you in your role as Luxor, the Moon-Prince of Midnight have the power to directly control three



Identity crisis? The touch of a key will bring you the lowdown on whether or not your current personal is non grata.



Night must fall, and the colours of dusk add an eerie beauty to Singleton's sandscapes.

other characters who are sympathetic to your cause. They are Morkin, Tarithel and Rorthron and are accessed simply by pressing one of the function keys. When one of those alternatives is selected, the screen immediately changes to that character's viewpoint, wherever he may be in Icemark.

The player may look or move in any of eight directions, and choose one of several courses of action. He is also able to check progress in several ways. He may for instance ask for more detailed information about his present location, seek intelligence about any battle or skirmish in which he has been involved, confirm the position of his own army and of any others in the same location, and learn more about the character of the person under his control (and beware — this can change during the course of a game!).

In *Doomdark's Revenge*, as in its predecessor, the sophistication of the combat interludes belies Mike Singleton's interest in, and mastery of, wargaming — for although the options are much simpler than in a conventional simulation (because, after all, combat is only one of the game's many features), one's strategy can really be quite subtle. Here, combat is by no means a question of swiping at the nearest adversary and hoping that your strength holds up for a few more telling blows. Instead you are concerned with manipulating a whole army, and then deciding whether to attack or simply approach another army, not knowing whether it is comprised of allies or adversaries.

There are more than just wandering armies, and special characters, depicted in Mike Singleton's unique graphic style. In the Kingdom of Icemark you will also discover strange watchtowers, fortresses, palaces, temples, torchlit tunnels and refreshing fountains — not to mention the cold mists that will spoil your view but at least entrap Shareth's iceguard.

The wonder of it is that a 64 version has been held back so long. But it is here to enjoy now, and enjoy it you will — enormously. The final part of Luxor's epic quest, *Eye of the Moon*, is due out soon. One hopes that it will not be another year before a 64 implementation of that title too is made available, to complete a trilogy of strategy adventures that, in terms of their stunning visual appeal, originality and playability, have no equals.

Graphics	★★★★★
Literary Merit	★★★★
Intelligence	★★★★
Toughness	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★

High in the saddle in the kingdom of a million mountains, but there are seven more view to check before Luxor moves on.



• CHARTS •

	1	(1)	**The Worm in Paradise** — C64/128 (Level 9, GrA, £7.95)
	2	(3)	**Terrormolinos** — C64/128 (Melbourne House, GrA, £9.95 cass.)
	3	(7)	**Seas of Blood** — C64/128 (Adventure International, GrA, £9.95)
	4	(2)	**The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole** — C64/128 (Mosaic, GrA, £7.95)
	5	(8)	**Quest for the Holy Grail** — C64/128 (Mastertronic, GrA, £1.99)
NEW	**6**	(1)	**The Odyssey** — C64/128 (Duckworth, TA, £9.95)
	7	(5)	**The Never Ending Story** — C64/128 (Ocean Software, GrA, £9.95)
	8	(6)	**Robin of Sherwood** — C64/128 (Adventure International, GrA, £7.95)
NEW	**9**	(–)	**Doomdark's Revenge** — C64/128 (Beyond Software, GrA, £9.95)
NEW	**10**	(–)	**Masquerade** — C64/128 (All American Adventures, GrA, £14.95 disk only)

Level 9 deservedly hangs onto the top spot in this month's chart, which also tracks the success of other hot New Year releases.

The fabulously entertaining *Lord of The Rings* from Melbourne House, which shot to the No. 3 spot in last month's chart on the basis of preorders alone, now shifts up another place to displace the spotty but endearing Adrian Mole, and another new entry from last month, Adventure International's variation on a theme that combines a full-feature graphic adventure with real-time combat interludes, sails into an even higher place in the ratings.

Mastertronic's bargain basement title marks that label's first-ever appearance in the Valley's chart, and Duckworth's new double-tape textbuster also makes its debut. The splendid 64 implementation of Doomdark's Revenge also appears on the landscape, and All American Adventures make a well-merited breakthrough with their marvellously illustrated, if pricey, teaser featuring a substandard Sam Spade.

● ADVENTURE NEWS ● ADVENTURE NEWS ● ADVENTURE NEWS ● ADV

● **Adventure International**, who started life as a marketing function for Scott Adams titles, have reached an agreement with US Gold to market their titles in the UK. In the past year, no Scott Adams product has materialised this side of the Atlantic. However, following his acquisition of rights to Brian Howarth adventures, Mike Woodroffe has worked with Howarth to produce some outstanding home-grown titles, including *Gremlins* (which outsold any Scott Adams title in the UK) and *Robin of Sherwood*. US Gold chief Geoff Brown says he's now thinking of using AI's expertise to produce adventure spin-offs from such arcade hits as Beachhead and Raid Over Moscow.

● **Softsel** appear to have got off to a bad start as the new British distributors of Infocom product. Even review copies of new or recent titles such as *Seastalker* and *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* were still unavailable in time for this month's column — nearly two months after Softsel's announcement that all five Infocom Classic titles would be available from late November.

● **Firebird** haven't fixed a release date yet, but it's now certain that they'll be producing a 64 version of *Runesoft*, a role-playing adventure originally developed by the defunct Games (Tower of Despair) Workshop.

● **Bug-Byte**, newly-arrived under the software group that owns Quicksilva and Mindgames, have announced a C16 version of Trevor Hall's classic 1983 title *Twin Kingdom Valley*.

Classic Competition

The Kingdom of Icemark provides the setting for two of the most absorbing, intelligent and intricate strategy adventures ever devised — and now you have a chance to explore its secrets, its hazards and its rewards for just the cost of a postage stamp thanks to the generosity of Beyond Software, who have stumped up 10 copies each of *Lords of Midnight* and the new *Doomdark's Revenge* as the prizes in this month's competition.

For your chance to win one of our free games, answer the simple question below and send off the cut out coupon without delay.

The first ever adventure game was called *Colossal Caves* and ran on a mainframe computer. It was programmed by (A) John Ransley (B) Pete Austin or, (C) Crowther and Woods.

Add your name and address and the titles of your three favourite current adventures — and tick the box to indicate whether you'd like The Lords of Midnight or Doomdark's Revenge (both on tape) if you win.

The correct answer is

A B C (Please circle your choice)

My three favourite adventures currently are:

....

Your Name ....

Address ....

....

....

I'd like **Lords of Midnight** .... **Doomdark's Revenge** .... (tick one)
Mail this whole coupon (or a copy of it on a Postcard) to:
Classics Competition, Commodore User,
Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

Winners

Here's a list of lucky winners from January's Nerverending Story Competition. Prizes are already finding their way into the postbag:
C. Combes of Dagenham, Lee Wood of Worcester, C. Munuachen of Luton, Laurence Rugg of London, D. Nugent of Romford, John Ahmed of Hull, Matthew Hide of Cleethorpes, John Dewar of Coventry, Alex Joss of Leigh-on-Sea and A. King of Rugby.

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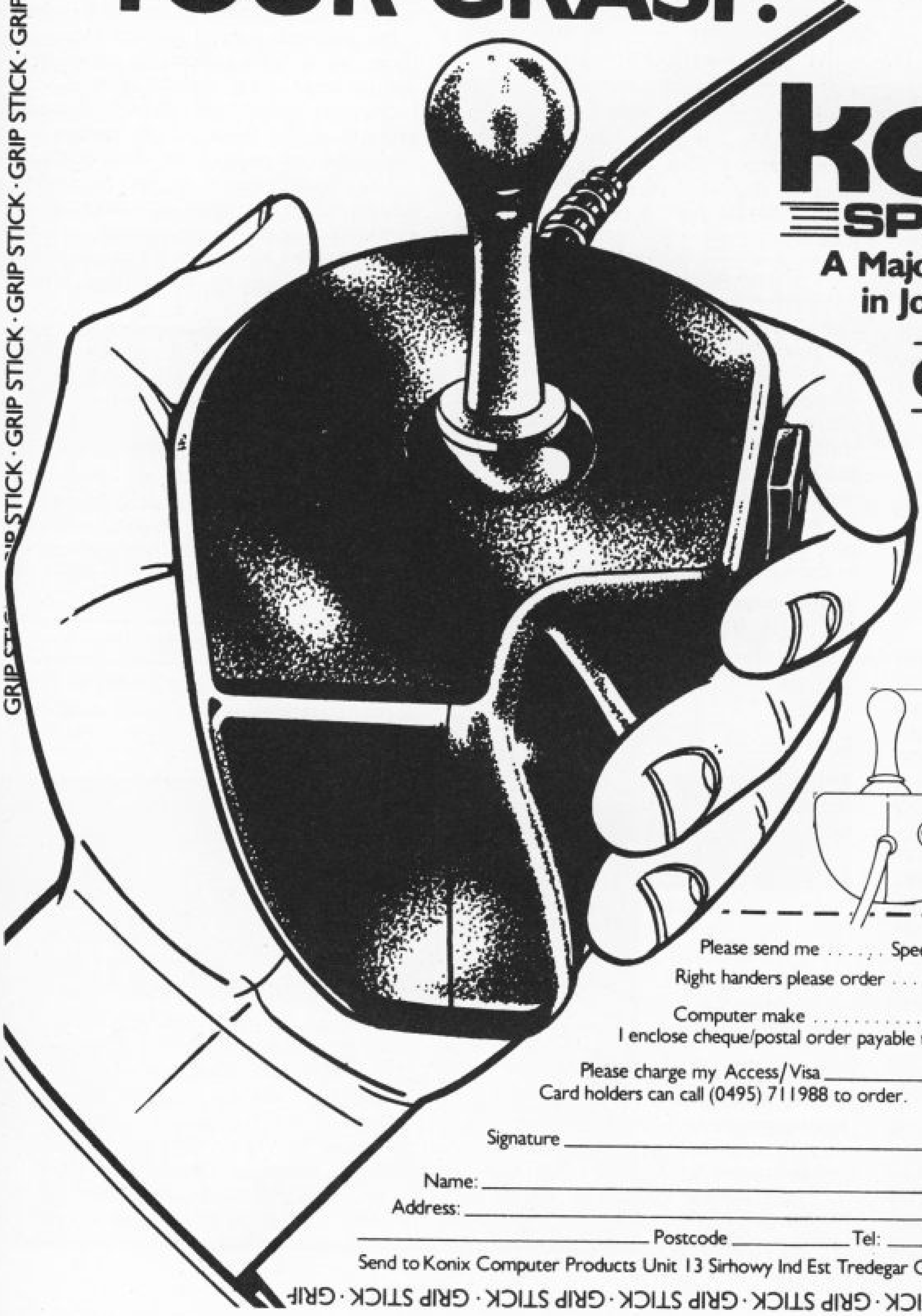
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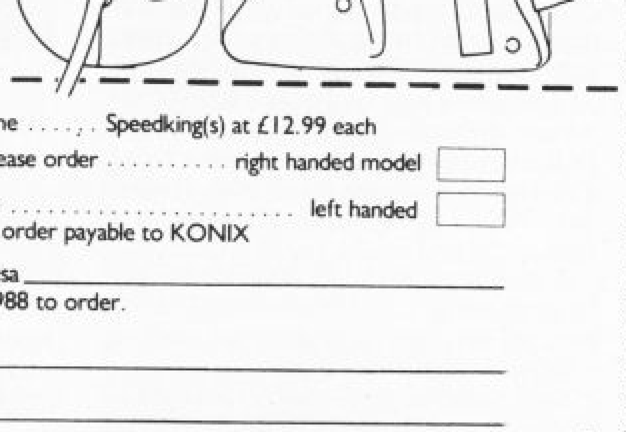
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Scroll you

by Daniel Gilbert

Activision'

You wouldn't try repairing a car if you weren't a mechanic, would you? So why try writing games when you can't program? Activision reckons it's got that solved with its new GameMaker program. We thought we'd check it out.

Activision's claims for its new **GameMaker** package are pretty inflated: it will let you create "incredible computer games" without having to learn complex languages or spend months programming your ideas. That's what the blurb says anyway. You've got to be cautious simply because similar packages in the past have always been such a let down.

But the man behind Gamemaker is none other than Garry Kitchen who's programming track record includes the *Space Shuttle* simulator and the *Designer's Pencil* — that sounds a bit more encouraging.

The package comes either as a cassette or disk which has Gamemaker on one side and a set of sprites, tunes, backgrounds and sound effects on the other. A blank tape or disk is supplied for you to put created programs on, with the option of entering a games designing competition using the Gamemaker.

It has a comprehensive (if not a little daunting) instruction manual which clearly explains all the aspects of the program and gives examples to emphasise points. There is also a vary useful summary sheet of all the main instructions and directions used throughout the package, as well as a chart/stave for the music editor.

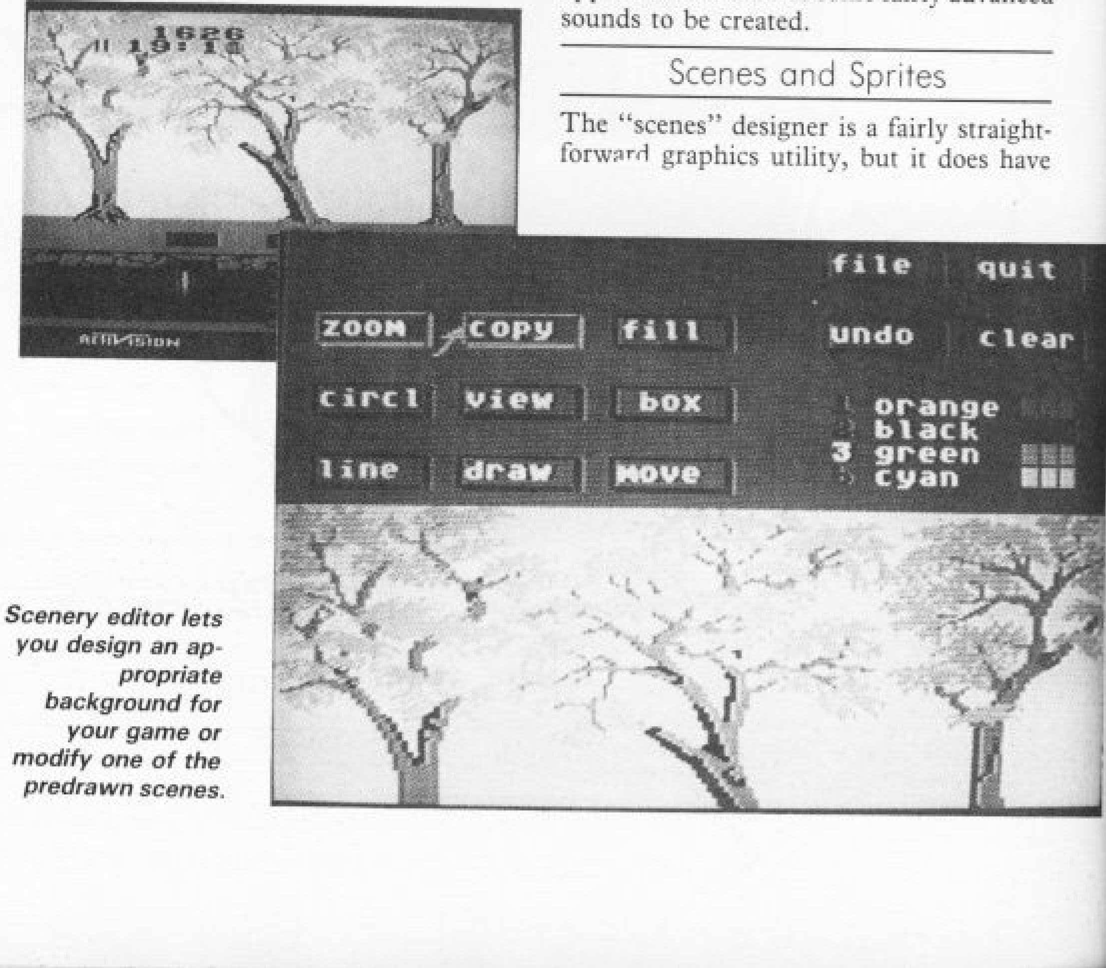
The main program consists of an icon-driven programming utility and a menu system to access other parts of the package. The language is a very fast and time-saving one, with such commands as 'SPRITE DIR =' which sets a sprite moving in a direction at a certain speed (also defined) and 'SONG IS x' which plays a named song — created on the music editor.

A well structured labelling system aids programming, too. Unfortunately, as all the inputs are icon-driven, program writing is often slowed down.

Each variable, for instance, requires you to scroll through all the letters A-Z. This can become extremely annoying when you are designing a long and complex game, as a page of instructions may take more than ten minutes, whereas input by keyboard would take a fifth of this time. One assumes that this is because a syntax-checker would have occupied too much memory.

Music and Sound

From the menu in the main program you can reach the music, sound, sprite or background (graphics) editors. The first of these, music, gives you a choice of thirteen instruments to play in three channels over three staves (a large no. of octaves). This has all the makings of a good package by itself — and there's a 'tie' facility to help the notes flow and a tempo setting so the pace of the tune can be varied, in addition to the wide ranging sound facilities.



Scenery editor lets you design an appropriate background for your game or modify one of the predrawn scenes.

As mentioned, a number of pre-made tunes are also supplied, although what you could do with tunes like the Blue Danube and the Star Spangled Banner defeats me. but you can simply play around with these for a while, changing speed and instruments, to get the feel of it. A very large, complicated tune can be written and saved using the Music Editor, making this one of the best parts of the whole package.

The sound editor is an interesting design, taking the form of a large sound synthesizer with 'knobs' which can be turned to alter envelopes, pitch, etc. and a graphic equalizer for the various filters, volume and speed.

This last feature refers to the speed at which the 'frames' of sound are played back (each sound effect is composed of several sounds or 'frames' played back consecutively).

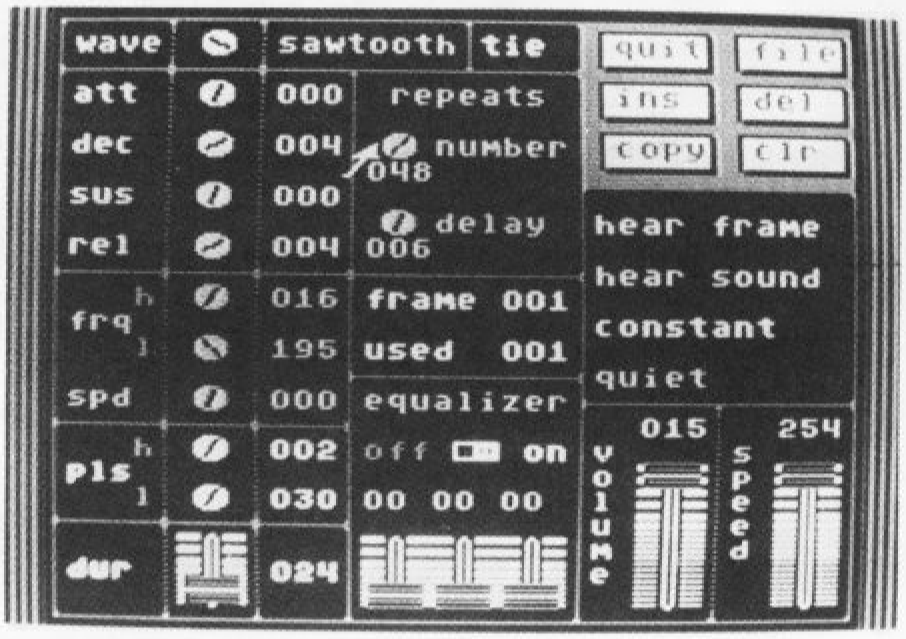
The design of each sound is pretty complex, involving nearly all the devices on screen, so you have to experiment quite a bit to get the hang of creating effective ones. This section is also professional in approach and enables some fairly advanced sounds to be created.

Scenes and Sprites

The "scenes" designer is a fairly straightforward graphics utility, but it does have

r own

's GameMaker reviewed



Lots of knobs to twiddle on the sound editor screen.

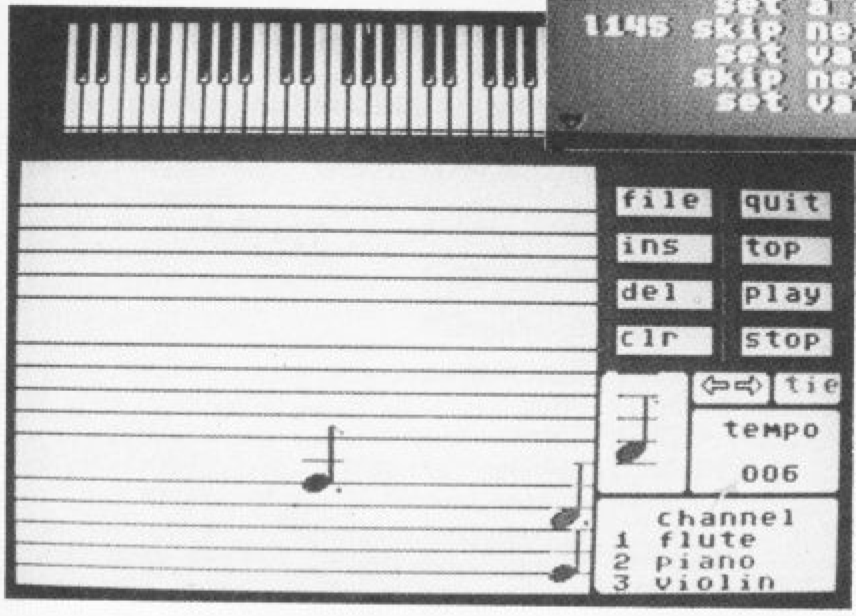
impressively fast execution. A palette of four colours is used to draw with and a features list enables circles, boxes, filled circles, filled boxes and lines to be drawn.

Screen areas can be copied or erased and a zoom function enables detailed work to be tackled in close-up. No quirks, no frills, no problems with this section.

Sadly the sprite designer crashed upon loading in the review copy probably because the review disk I used was an American import. But if it matches the other parts of the design package it will be quite competent. The instructions for it include multiple sprite animation, multi-colour and normal sprite design. A mass of pre-drawn sprites are supplied on disk or tape.



GameMaker features its own programming language.



Simply place notes on the stave to write music.

Conclusions

So, the body of a good package is all there. Unfortunately, there are a few 'little' things that have been omitted which I feel a truly excellent games designer would have. For instance, screen scrolling in games is not catered for, nor is speech design nor absolutely stunning sound effects. These features are what separate good games from classic games.

Another aggravating point is the limit of eight sprites on the screen at once — ok, so they are animated but that doesn't make up for the lack of numbers.

Two more moans: firstly, the memory available for programs is only large until you add music to it. The William Tell Overture, for instance, takes up a third of your total programming area. Secondly, you can forget multi-screened games: you only get two to play with.

The most I can imagine you could create with GameMaker is a souped-down *Exploding Fist* or *Fight Night* — they use only a few sprites on screen, only a few backgrounds, and only one tune. You could make a veritable *Pacman* but not *Space Invaders* (too many sprites), while *Rambo* represents everything this package cannot do.

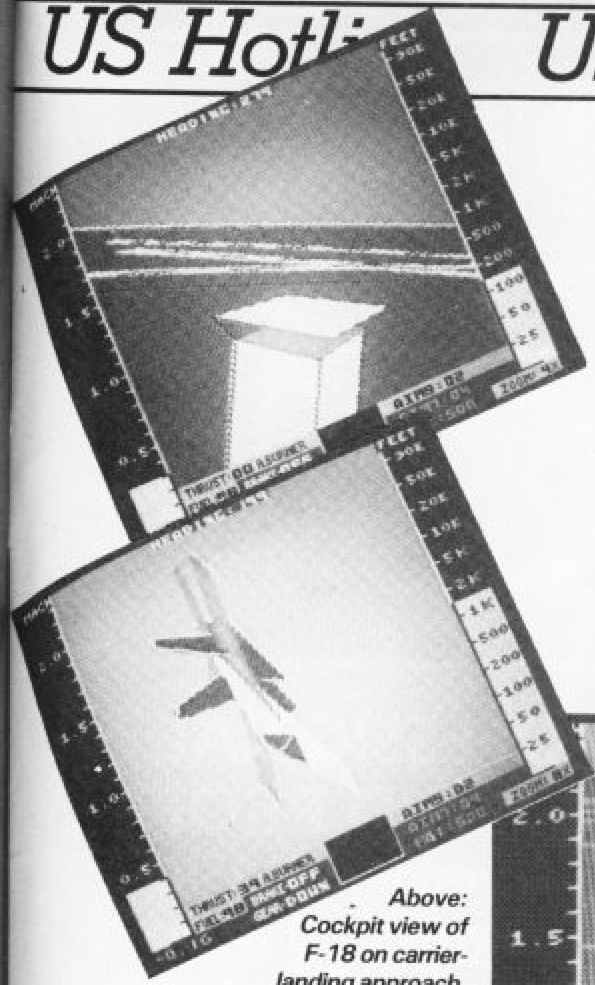
The restrictions are perhaps best illustrated if I say that at one point I had a snapping crocodile head, two merry-go-round rabbits, Santa Claus, two Zeppelins, an aircraft carrier and a toy dog flying around space accompanied by For He's A Jolly Good Fellow and I felt I was pushing the package to its limits.

I feel this is an improvement on similar programs like Games Creator, but it's not quite there yet. You could definitely make *some* quite good original games with the Game-Maker but I think you would *know* that they'd been made with this and not actually programmed.

- GameMaker
- Activision,
  Harley House,
  18 Marylebone Road,
  London NW1
  01-935 1428
- Price: £9.99/cass.
  £14.99/disk

The Jet Set

More up to the minute news from America's most dedicated Amiga watcher. But Dan's found time to keep you up to date on the newest software for the Commodore 64.
Dan Gutman *reports.*



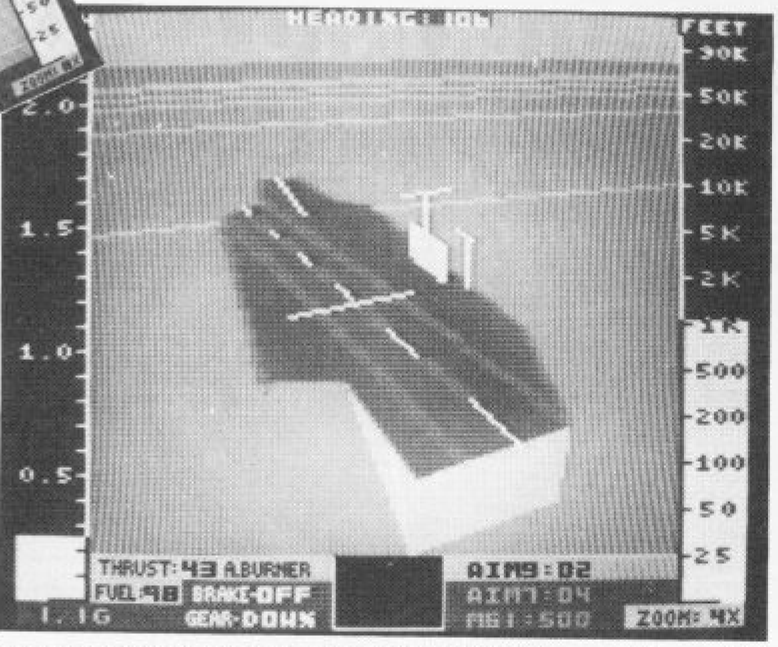
Above: Cockpit view of F-18 on carrier-landing approach. Below: Control tower view of F-18 in a dive.

The biggest news in the Commodore 64/128 world has been the recent release of SubLOGIC's *Jet* — you may or may not know that the biggest selling computer game in history (in the US) is SubLOGIC's Flight Simulator II. The program takes you on an aerial tour of the entire United States, stopping at 80 airports along the way. You can even fly your plane past the Sears Tower in Chicago, Seattle's Space Needle, or the Statue of Liberty in New York (Once I tried to fly between the two towers of The World Trade Centre and crashed).

So Jet is the long awaited sequel to Flight Simulator II. But this time, instead of flying a Piper 181 Cherokee Archer, you're piloting an F-16 Fighting Falcon. And you can do more than cruise around. The plane is much faster and more manoeuverable, and it's equipped with air-to-air missiles, AGM missiles, and smart bombs.

Jet is a big hit over here, and if you want to get a Commodore 64/128 copy for youself, contact SubLOGIC at 713 Edgebrook Dr., Champaign IL 61820 (include $42).

Rumour has it, by the way, that the next flight simulator from SubLOGIC will run over phone lines — a guy in New York and a guy in Los Angeles will be able to fly around and actually *see* each other's planes on their screens. Wow!



Jet for the Commodore 64 — Cockpit view of F-16 approaching control tower.

Now showing on Amiga

As you probably know, Amiga is capable of stereo sound. Predictably, the first stereo speakers have just been released for the machine. They're called "RoomMate" and they sell for $229. To get a set, contact: Bose Corporation, The Mountain, Framingham MA 01701 U.S.A.

Amiga software is starting to pour into the marketplace over here. Electronic Arts has just released eight new titles: *Skyfox, Seven Cities of Gold, Archon, Arcticfox, Financial Cookbook, Software Golden Oldies, Dr. J.* and *Larry Bird Go One On One,* and *Deluxe Paint.*

Most of these are translations of existing Apple and Commodore 64 programs, but *Deluxe Paint* is new and pretty spectacular. It's a graphics program similar to Apple's MacPaint, but you can use 32 colours for your background and 32 more for your foreground. You can customize any colour by changing the amount of red, green or blue. The computer lets you magnify, zoom, smear, blend, shade and all kinds of other manipulations of the image.

Other new Amiga programs due to arrive any day: *Marble Madness* (Electronic Arts), *The Print Shop* (Broderbund), *Sargon III (Hayden), and Deja Vu, The Halley Project* (Mindscape). The software base is still very small, but new packages are coming out every day. And on this side of the Atlantic, the catch phrase is, "Software drives hardware". No computer has ever sold very well until a decent library of software has been available for it.

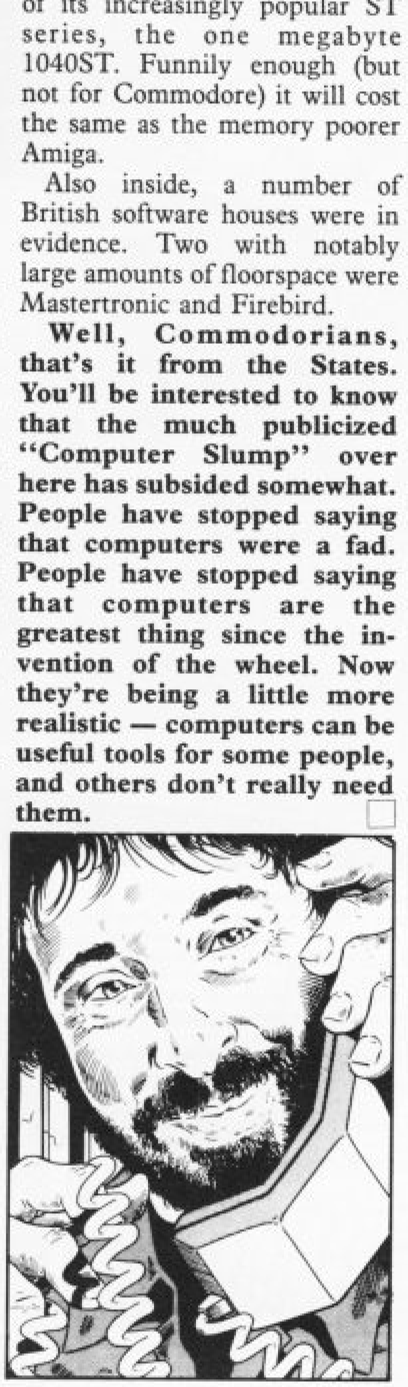
Of course, there's a "Catch-22" to that — why should a software company waste its time and resources developing programs for a computer until a lot of people have bought it? Oh well, with that logic, no computer would *ever* be successful. Eventually a good computer will sell on its own merit?

No show at CES

Meanwhile, Commodore have been guilty of party pooping, prefering to stay away from the prestigious winter Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. Instead, they held a press conference at a nearby hotel whilst, inside, Jack Tramiel's Atari announced an even bigger version of its increasingly popular ST series, the one megabyte 1040ST. Funnily enough (but not for Commodore) it will cost the same as the memory poorer Amiga.

Also inside, a number of British software houses were in evidence. Two with notably large amounts of floorspace were Mastertronic and Firebird.

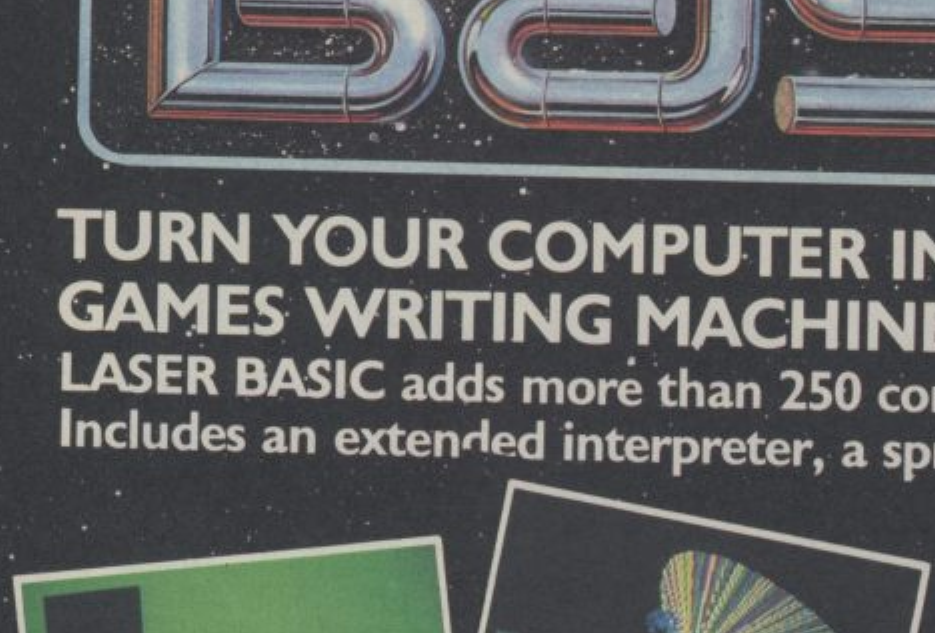
Well, Commodorians, that's it from the States. You'll be interested to know that the much publicized "Computer Slump" over here has subsided somewhat. People have stopped saying that computers were a fad. People have stopped saying that computers are the greatest thing since the invention of the wheel. Now they're being a little more realistic — computers can be useful tools for some people, and others don't really need them.



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HAPPY HACKER



Much is happening in the wonderful world of comms — notably cheap modems and lots of on-line software. But beware, there have been recent disputes over modems which don't wear the all-important green badge of approval from British Telecom (which, of course, forbids you to connect to the BT phone system). But lets get on with the news . . .

by Geof Wheelwright

● **Solely 64 Salutations** — Here's the latest news from Micronet Towers, where Commodore User's revamped *Happy Hacker* column was greeted personally by Solely 64 bigwig Phil Godsell. He sent this personal missive . . .

'Hello Geof, read your Happy Hacker column in Commodore User, and couldn't resist dropping you a line. You mention all the wonderful software on Compunet (fair enough), but I hope you're going to mention such gems as Elite's *Commando* on the 'Net, which is number one in all commercial charts and which we had first day of release as telesoftware. By the way, look out for Tasword 64 on the 'Net.

All the Best,
Phil Godsell (Software)'

Consider it mentioned, Phil . . .

● **Micronet Freebies** — *Commando*, however, isn't the only 64 software available on the 'Net. There's quite a selection of FREE (gratis, no funds involved) games, utilities and other goodies which can be downloaded.

But take care that any savings you might make on the software itself are not increased by a bigger bill from BT. Some programs — such as the *Rollerball Express* arcade game — can take more than 30 minutes to download and save to tape (the problem is not particularly acute for disk drive users, who are already used to putting up with the snail-like pace of the 1541 disk)!

In recognition of this problem (which Solely 64 admits isn't limited to *Rollerball*), you can now get 'long-load' software on tape from Micronet.

For £1, tape users can get up to two Solely 64 programs on cassette in turbo load format. The 'Net says the change is to cover postage and packing, cassette cost plus a small amount to cover handling. It points out that the actual call cost to download software such as *Sid's Jukebox* and *Rollerball Express* to tape is in excess of 50p plus the cost of the tape!

The 'Net promises that in future, any telesoftware on Solely 64 that will be available on turbo cassette and will be clearly indicated in the SOLELY 64 Software Index on 80013321.

● **Meanwhile At Compunet** — Compunet is still having a ball with it's new *Partyline* and Editor Jane Firbank now informs us it's now more popular than the old 'on-line chat' ever was — with new people logging on every night.

The only problem with this electronic party is trying find quiet places to go off and have a private chat — so Compunet is furiously working to get its 'private room' facility set-up, whereby a few people on the partyline can section themselves off and have a quiet on-line conversation.

These will be accessed via a *ROOM command, whereby you might invent and enter a room called 128 with a *ROOM 128 command — and you could go into that room to chat with friends about the 128.

Editor Jane also tells us that there could be *LOCK command for really private conversations, but that's still in the planning stages.

● **Getting Your Number** — Compunet is also working on alternatives to navigation by 'page numbers'. It soon hopes to implement alphanumeric gotos which would allow you to goto MUD just by typing the word MUD after hitting the GOTO command.

Most major sections such as NEWS, PARTY and JUNGLE would thus be quickly accessible without having to remember whole loads of numbers.

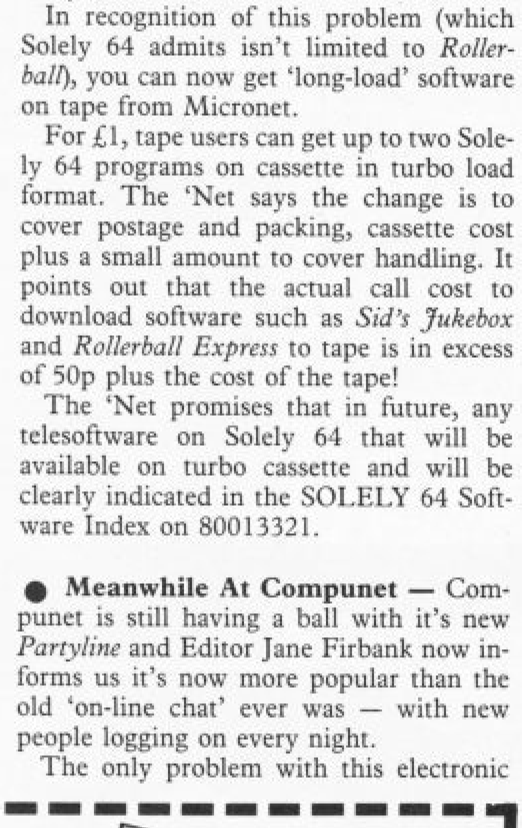
● **On-Line Aid** — The computer communications industry's contribution to the Band Aid fund-raising campaign is looking for any and all contributions from individuals and companies to aid African famine relief.

Money coming into Online Aid through this appeal will be channeled through Band Aid/Live Aid to provide immediate food aid and — in the longer term — go towards relief and development project. Anyone wishing to contribute or help this campaign can contact Claire Gooding on 01-624 7945 or Paul Walton on 01-515 2739.

That's all the hacking news that's fit to print this month — but I look forward to hearing your comments and ideas for this column. Remember, you can contact me on Prestel mailbox 013280101 or on Compunet via the ID CBMUSER. Happy Hacking!

HH

COMPETITION



The Happy Hacker is pleased (if not happy) to announce a new competition which could win you a copy of *The Hacker's Handbook* for the Commodore 64 (by Ian Scales and a certain Geof Wheelwright, published by Longman).

I can vouch for at least one of the authors and promise that the book will be a good read. For your chance to win a copy, answer the questions below and send off to Commodore User, Happy Hacker Competition, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU. Entries must reach us no later than 20th March.

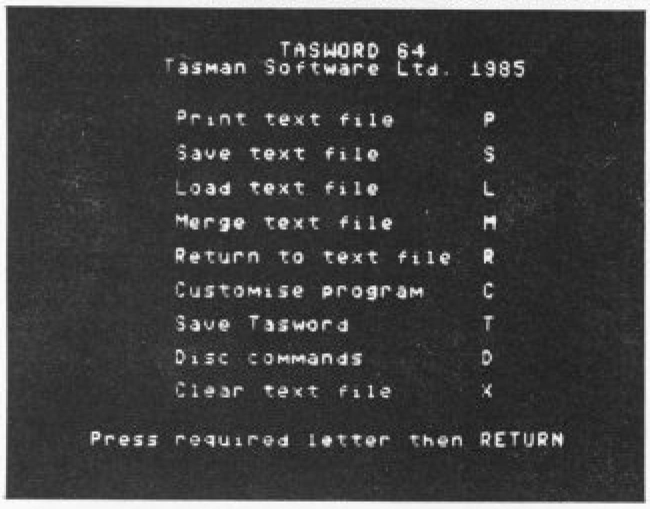
1. What was the recent film in which a teenage hacker almost caused a third World War?
2. Which member of the Royal Family had their Telecom Gold account hacked last year. Was it (A) Princess Diana; (B) The Duke of Edinburgh or (C) Prince Harry?
3. What is the name of the interactive adventure game currently enjoying great popularity amongst modem owners?

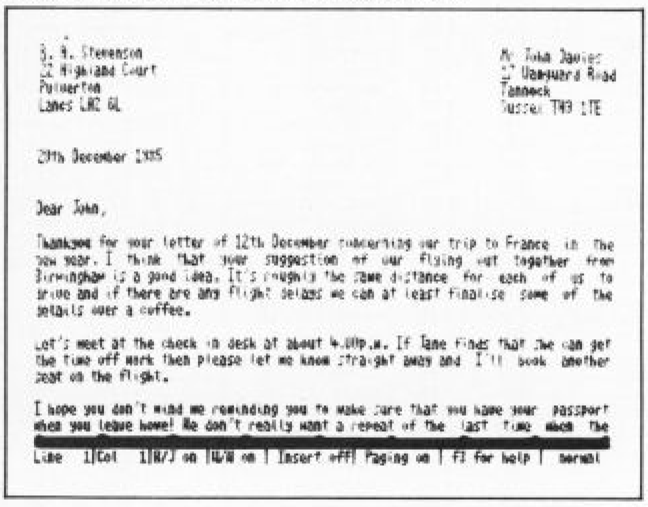


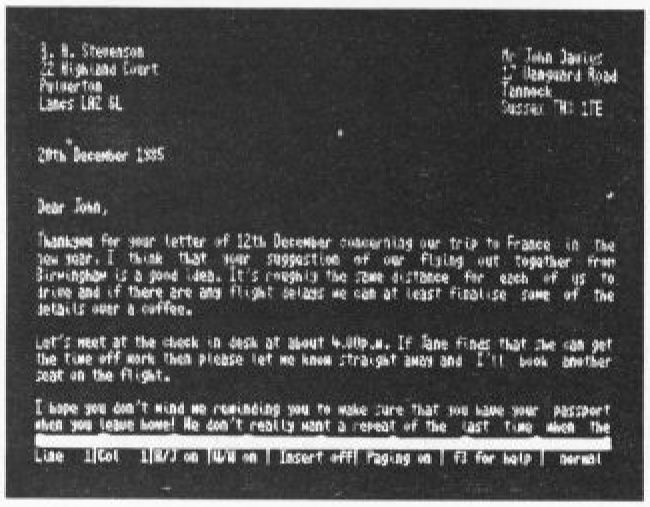
TASWORD 64

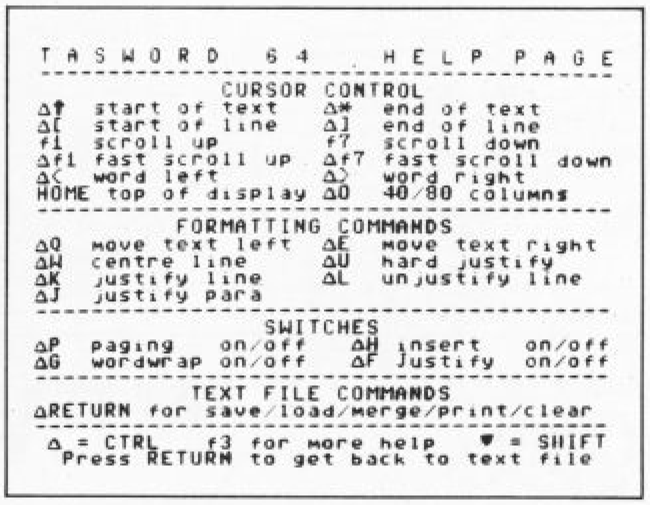
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GLUED TO THE BOX

A roundup of monitors for the 128

by Ken McMahon

Now that you've moved up to a 128 you won't be content just to plug it into the old telly. With its 80-column display and hi-res output, you can use it with a confusingly wide range of monitors. We explain and list all the options.

If you've splashed out enough hard earned to buy a 128, you'll probably want to get the most out of it. And the first thing you'll notice is that you won't get very much if you plug it into the telly at home.

The reason is simple: you won't be able to get 80-columns or a high resolution screen, and you won't be able to run the programs specially designed for the 128 (I'll explain why later). So the telly just won't do: let the family watch Eastenders on it. You've simply got to buy a monitor.

Buying anything for your computer is fraught with problems; there's always a simple and a hard way. The simplest way is to buy the excellent *Commodore 1901* colour monitor specially designed for the 128.

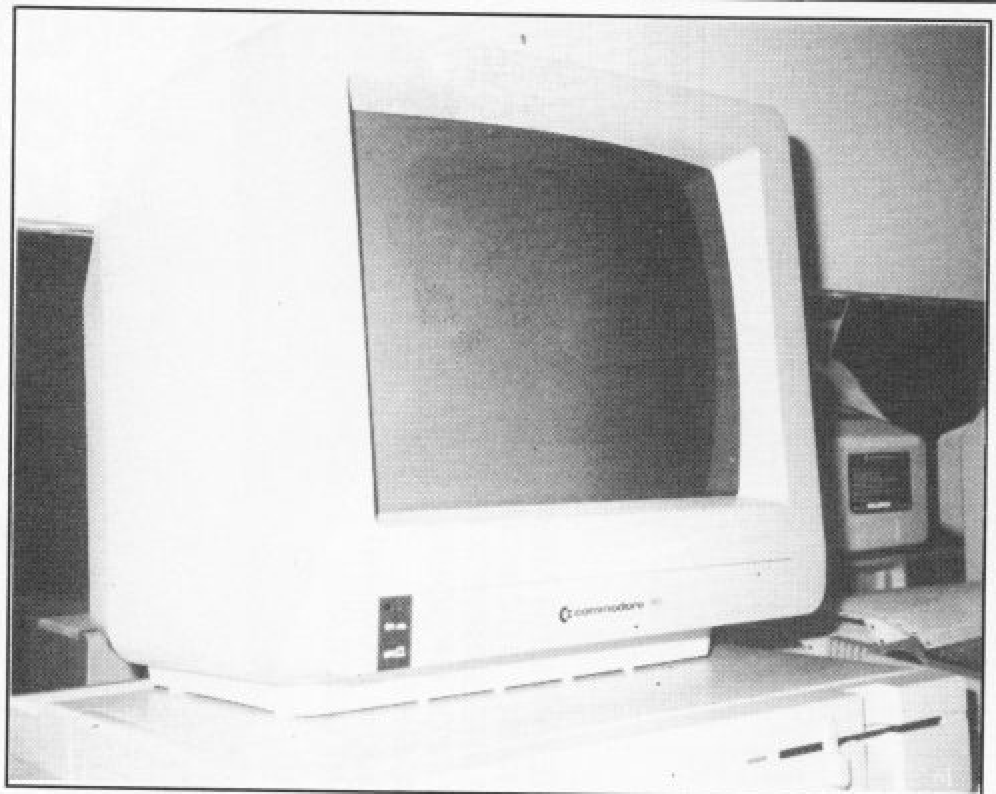
It will work in 40-columns (64 mode) and by simply flicking a switch, you get the full 80 column RGBI output that the 128 can produce. At £299.99 it will also produce a hole in your pocket. If you've got that kind of money, you can stop here, the rest of you can carry on reading.

There's a wide variety of cheaper monitors you can buy, and the best way of choosing is to decide what you want to do with your 128. The hardened gamester needs a good quality colour screen whilst a business user might settle for a monochrome version.



Trilogig's Vidcon 2 lets you display 80n columns on the Commodore 1701 monitor but costs a whopping £50.

Commodore's 1901 colour monitor covers all the options — at a price.



Before we look at what particular monitors have to offer it's probably a good idea to examine the kind of output the C128 can produce and how it does it.

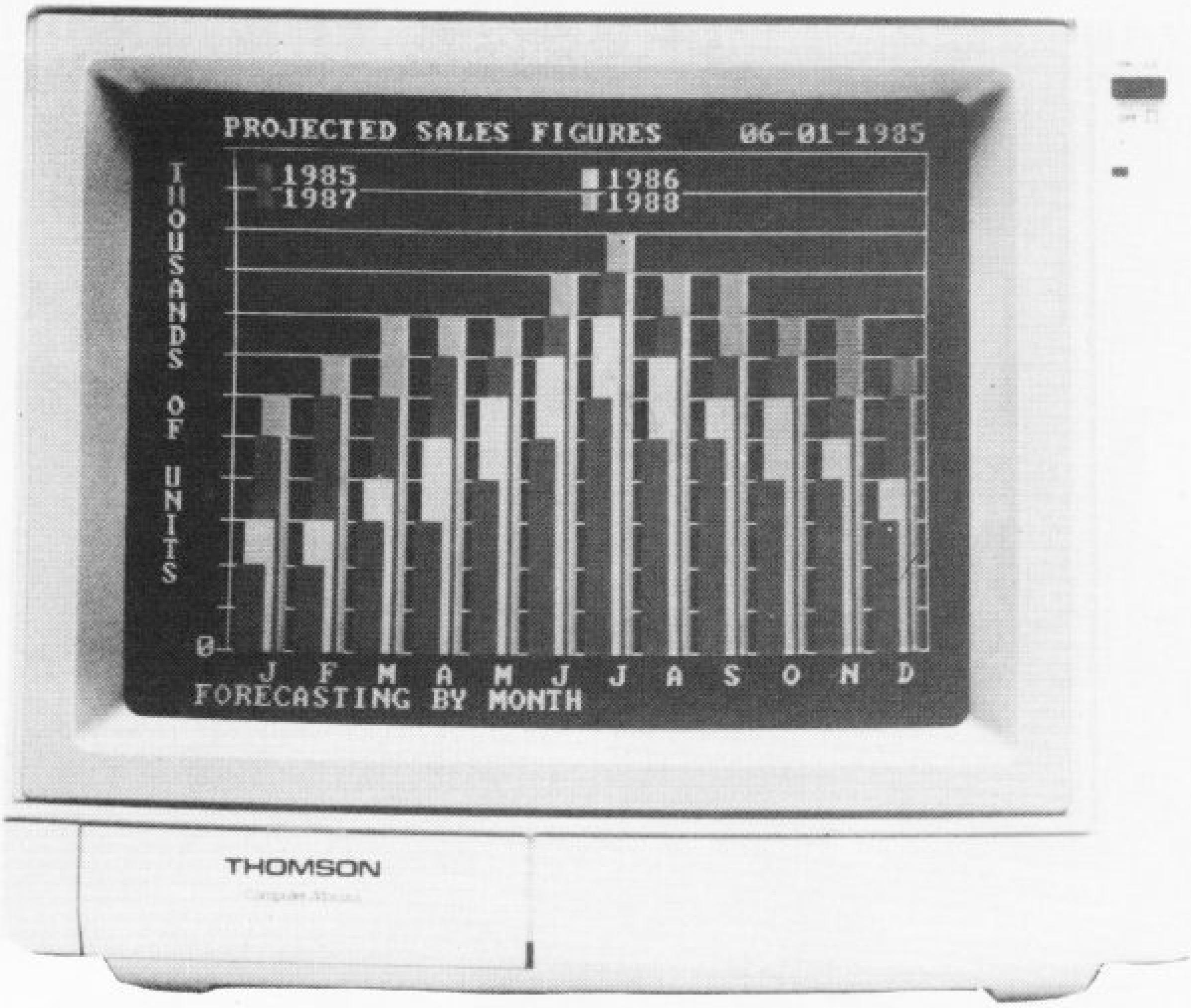
128 video sockets

• **RF connector:** found at the back of the 128, like the other video ports. This sends the picture to your TV in the same way it receives a television broadcast. Since the TV is low resolution, the picture produced is pretty poor quality. That's why the 128 will only display a 40 column picture on a TV set.

• **composite video connector:** This DIN-type socket outputs the red, green and blue picture components in a combined signal to a suitable monitor. It also sends the Audio signals to the monitor's speaker.

One aspect of this socket which makes it different is that it will also carry separate chroma and luminance outputs capable of being received by Commodore monitors. This produces a slightly better quality picture than a standard composite video monitor, but it's still not good enough to produce an 80 column picture.

• **RGBI connector:** This is immediately to the right of the RF socket. It outputs the sound as well as the red, green and blue picture elements on separate pins, thus ensuring the highest picture quality possible. The 128 can only be used in 80 column mode when connected to an RGBI monitor via this port. The 'I' incidentally, stands for intensity and makes possible the use of 16 colours in 80 column mode instead of the usual 8.



Thomson CM31481V1 — one of the best alternatives to the 1901.

Resolution

Apart from the way in which the signals are transmitted and received, the other factor which determines picture quality is the **resolution** of a monitor. Manufacturers are prone.to publishing reams of statistics which are more likely to confuse the prospective buyer than give a clear indication of a monitor's resolution. It's not unusual to see medium or even standard resolution models described as high resolution.

The clearest indicator of a monitor's resolution is the **dot pitch**. This is the distance, in millimetres between two adjacent phosphor dots on the screen. Generally speaking, monitors with a dot pitch of around .65mm are described as standard resolution, about .42mm as medium, and anything below .31mm would be high resolution.

To confuse the issue not all manufacturers indicate the dot pitch of their monitors, but instead quote the **bandwidth** MilliHertz (MHz). Although it's not as accurate an indicator of resolution, generally speaking, the higher the bandwidth, the higher the resolution.

Monitor options

Now that you know all the jargon connected with video, it's time to look at the real buying choices. They split into five groups:

(1) TV/Monitor: This is a combined TV and colour monitor, which is considerably cheaper than a dedicated monitor. On the minus side, the resolution and therefore picture quality will be at the bottom end of the scale. Also, the models shown here only have RGB (no I) inputs, which means only eight colours in 80 column mode.

COLOUR MONITORS

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CM8500	14" screen Composite video input Standard resolution	£222.95	Philips
CM8501	14" screen RGB input Standard resolution	£243.95	Philips
CM8524	14" screen RBG/composite video inputs Standard resolution Green switch	£279.95	Philips
CM8533	14" screen RGBI/composite video inputs Medium resolution Green switch	£314.95	Philips
CM31481VI	12" screen RGBI/composite video inputs Green/amber switch Tilt/swivel stand optional	£260	Thomson
CM36512VI	14" screen RGBI/composite video inputs Green/amber switch Tilt/swivel stand optional	£270	Thomson
1701	14" screen Composite video with separate chrom/lum inputs Lead included	£230	Commodore
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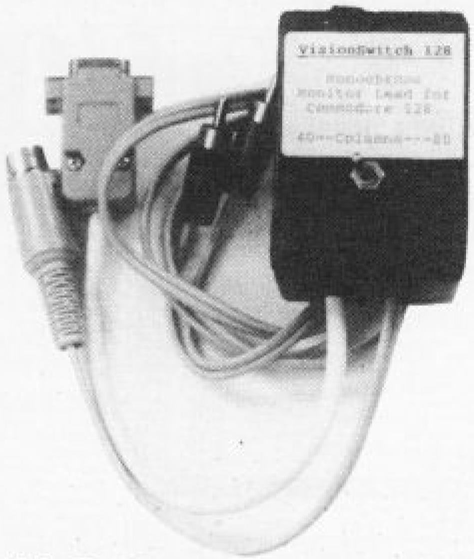
MODEL	FEATURES	PRICE	COMPANY
BM7502	12" green screen Bandwidth 20MHz Adjustable stand	£87.95	Philips 01-689 2166
BM7522	12" amber screen Bandwidth 20MHz Adjustable stand	£91.95	Philips
BM7542	12" white screen Bandwidth 20MHz Adjustable stand	£119.95	Philips
VM3102VG	12" green screen High resolution Available with amber screen bandwidth 35MHz Tilt/swivel stand optional	£85	Thomson
ZVM1220	12" green screen Available with amber screen Tilt/swivel stand optional	£89.95 (£98.95) (£14)	Zenith 0494 448781
1900M	12" green screen no tilt/swivel stand	£99.95	Commodore 0536 205555
Boxer 12	12" green screen Bandwidth 20MHz composite, RGB matrix	£90	Hantarex 01-778 1414

T.V. MONITORS

MODEL	FEATURES	PRICE	COMPANY
MC05	14" screen T.V. monitor RGB/composite video inputs Low resolution	£220	Ferguson 01-807 3060
CF1114	14" screen T.V/monitor RGB/composite video inputs Low resolution	£209.95	Philips
CTM1400	14" screen T.V./monitor RGB/composite video inputs Low resolution	£220	Fidelity

ADAPTORS

MODEL	FEATURES	PRICE	COMPANY
Vidcon 1	RGBI to PAL converter Provides 80 column 16 colour output to T.V. or composite video monitor	£59.95	Trilogic 0274 684 289
Vidcon 2	As 1 but without T.V. option Suitable for use with the Commodore 1701 monitor	£49.95	Trilogic
Vidcon 3	Monochrome version of Vidcon 1	£29.95	Trilogic
Vision-switch	Provides 80 column monochrome picture on a composite video monitor	£9.95	Sabre 0332 556361
Magic Monitor	Provides 80 column monochrome display on monitors giving only 40 columns	£14.95	Robtek 01-290 0118



VisionSwitch costs only a tenner but it won't let you display colours.

(2) Monochrome Monitors: Perfect for business use, word processing, etc and certainly the cheapest way of getting to own a monitor — but no colour.

(3) Composite Video Monitors: There are two reasons why you might be using a composite video monitor with a 128. The most likely is that you have upgraded from a 64 and couldn't afford a new RGBI monitor. Alternatively it may be that you have no need of an 80 column screen, but wanted a better than TV quality picture.

(4) RGBI Monitors: This is the bee's knees. An RGBI monitor will enable you to get the best from your 128 in 80 column, 16 colour mode. Most RGBI monitors also incorporate a composite video input. This is essential, as without it the 128 cannot be used in 40 column or hi-res graphics mode. By the way (for reasons we've no space to go into), you won't be able to connect a monitor with an RGB TTL input, like a lot of the Microvitec models.

(5) Adaptors: There are various adaptors now on the market which will allow you to use the 128 in 80 column mode on either a TV or a composite video monitor. The cheapest of these will only produce a monochrome screen, but at the top of the range Trilogic's *Vidcon 1* will produce a sixteen colour 80 column screen for £60.

Obviously the picture quality is not up to the standard of 'real' RGBI. Apart from less sharp definition of characters the most noticeable shortcoming is the degradation of colours, which appear slightly muddy. However, at the price it's certainly worth considering for those who already own a 1701 monitor.

Once you've made your choice as to the type of monitor which best suits your needs, it's simply a question of choosing between what's available. As well as considering factors such as screen resulution it's worth looking at the additional features manufacturers include.

Most RGBI monitors have a monochrome switch which gives a green or amber screen, the Thomson range includes both.

Some offer swivel/tilt bases and anti-glare screens as standard and the dimensions may be important if you have limited desk space. Bear in mind that you will probably have to pay extra for connecting leads which most good dealers should have in stock. □

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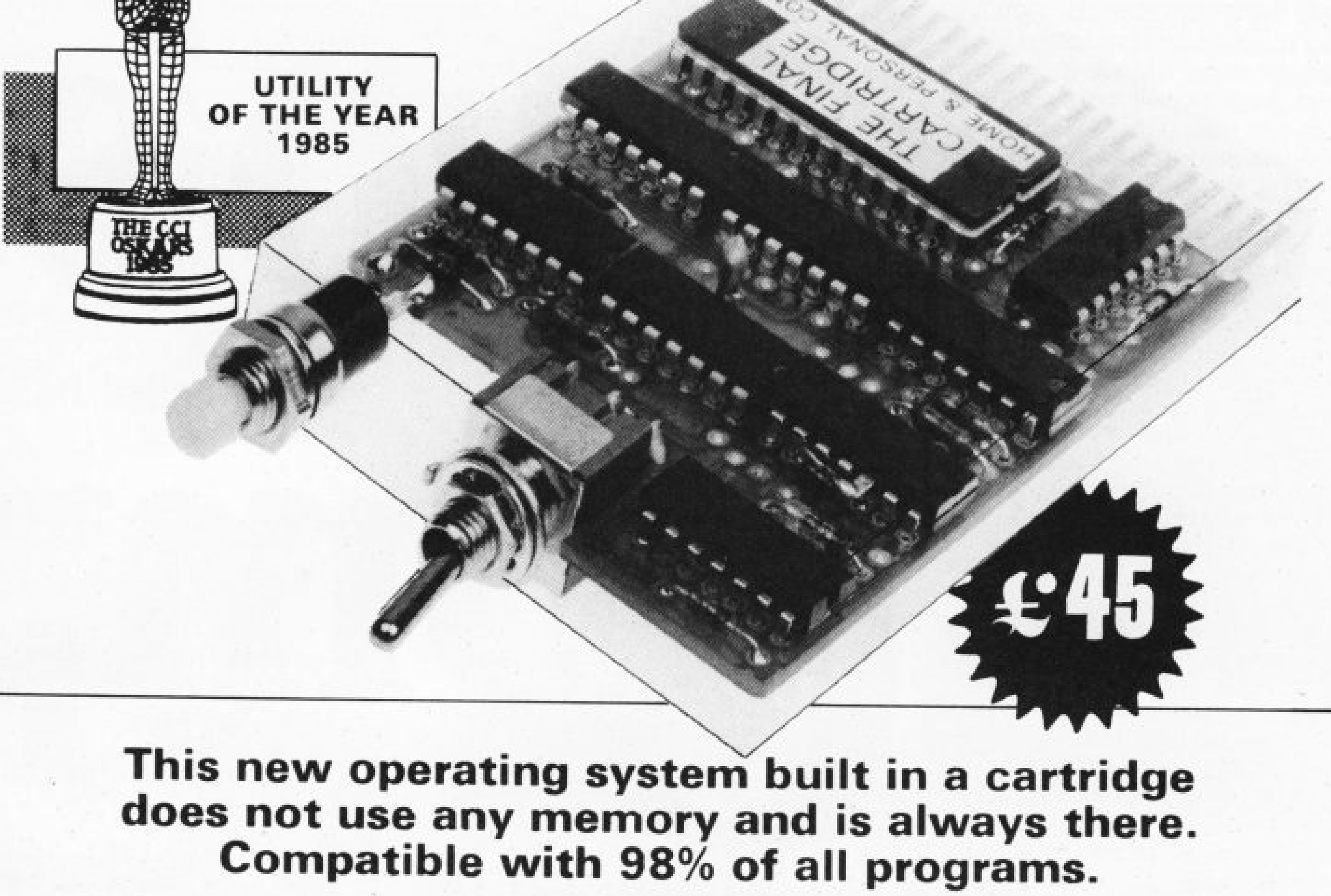
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* works with C128 in the 64 mode.

Last month we rounded up all the business and serious software available so far on the new 128. Now it's time for some in-depth reviewing of two particularly impressive packages: Micro-Clerk and Vizawrite Classic.

Two's Comp

MICRO-CLERK

Micro-Clerk is a pretty unique piece of software. It offers not only a cash accounts program but wordprocessing, filing, spreadsheet and 'jotter' functions — and they all integrate. It makes full use of the 128's memory and Basic (it's actually written in an 'enhanced' Basic invented by its author) and capitalises on the latest trends for colour, pop-up menus and the like.

You can use it with both the 1570 and 1571 disk drives, but not with the 1541 as you have to make a back-up program before the program will run — and the 1541 won't let you.

Micro-Clerk comes on two disks, one for the main program and the other for the accounts programs. You also have to fit a security "dongle". The user is then taken to an opening "noticeboard", a neat idea, on which is displayed any message that was typed in at close-down the last time the computer was used.

The date the machine was last used is displayed, and the user is given the opportunity of up-dating this or continuing. If this is the first time, you're instructed to back-up the supplied program disk.

When you're done all that, you're confronted with the main menu and its seven options: *Accounts, Typing, Filing, Spreadsheet, General, Back-up* and *Finish.*

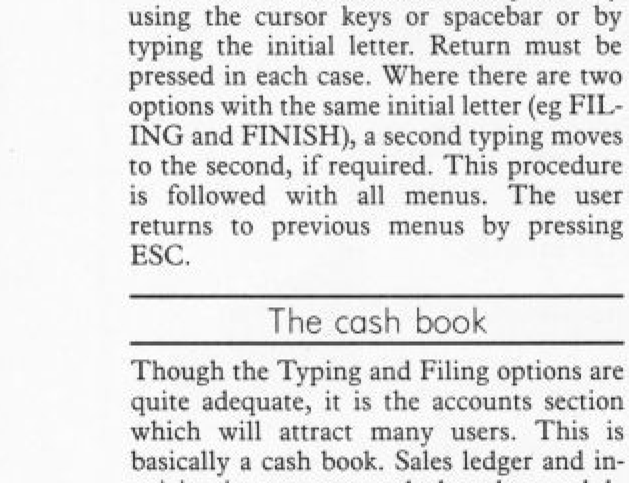
You can move between the options by using the cursor keys or spacebar or by typing the initial letter. Return must be pressed in each case. Where there are two options with the same initial letter (eg FILING and FINISH), a second typing moves to the second, if required. This procedure is followed with all menus. The user returns to previous menus by pressing ESC.

The cash book

Though the Typing and Filing options are quite adequate, it is the accounts section which will attract many users. This is basically a cash book. Sales ledger and invoicing is not supported, though a module is under development that will remedy this.

The cashbook is on a separate disk, but on a 1571 double-sided disk it might be possible to copy the cash files to the reverse of the main (backed-up) disk, making disk swapping unnecessary. All data files are held on the program disks and there are three levels of password protection.

Micro-Clerk offers weekly reports on cash receipts.

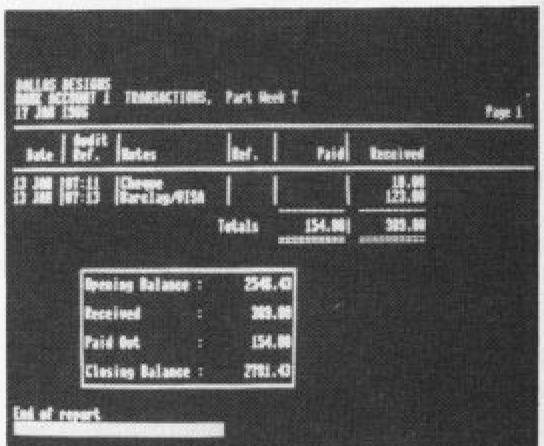


After entry to the accounts section, the user has the choice of selecting weekly or monthly accounts, starting date, type of VAT scheme (standard, or one of the special retailer schemes), and clearing old entries. Some tutorial entries are included, which are handy at first for seeing how the system works, but they would have to be cleared before it could be used seriously.

Analysis headings from 100 to 999 can be set up, and some specimen headings have already been supplied: sales, stationery, VAT adjustment, cost of sales, wages, fixed assets, bank loan, and so on. These are sub-divided into nine groups — sales, purchases, other income, expenses and overheads, capital employed, long term liabilities, fixed assets, current assets, and current liabilities.

The name of the groups can be changed, but not their meaning, since they are used to calculate gross and net profit, turnover and so on.

This constitutes a really powerful nominal ledger, which should satisfy the most scrupulous accountant or Customs and Excise Inspector, printing an automatic audit trail at the end of each week or month, as required.



Micro-Clerk keeps tabs on your bank balance.

The wordprocessor

Despite its modest description, the "typing" option is a full-function word processor including mail merge and block move. With the "jotter" facility, it's possible to cut and paste information from any other area of the program.

For example, to include accounts details such as balance sheet or the results of any heading, the user must press F7 while

within accounts. Then after moving to "Typing" F8 must be pressed to paste the info onto the jotter. This process is also password-controlled.

The jotter can also be used to access a full diary/calendar function, disk and printer functions, calculator and electric typewriter (printing one line each time Return is pressed).

The spreadsheet

The spreadsheet is a fairly modest affair, with a sheet of 26 columns, 9 characters wide (unchangeable), and 52 rows. Formulae may be up to 70 characters long. When SAVED to disk, a sequential file with the suffix ".SP" is produced, though only the cells on which entries have been made are SAVEd. The part of the spreadsheet on screen at any time can be copied to the jotter by pressing F7. This permits sections of the spreadsheet to be incorporated into "Typing" WP files.

by Karl Dallas

any

Micro-Clerk and Vizawrite Classic reviewed

Conclusion

This is a very impressive package. Space available does not permit more than a superficial description but any cash trader would find it worthwhile investing in a C128 for this one piece of software alone.

- Micro-Clerk
- Commodore Business Machines 0536 205555
- Price: £99.95 inc VAT
- Format: disk (plus dongle)

VIZAWRITE CLASSIC

Vizawrite Classic is a sophisticated upgrade to the already popular Vizawrite wordprocessor on the Commodore 64. Since then, it's also appeared for the IBM PC and its clones. If you've upgraded from the 64 version of Vizawrite, yes, it is possible to read files on the new program, but more about that later.

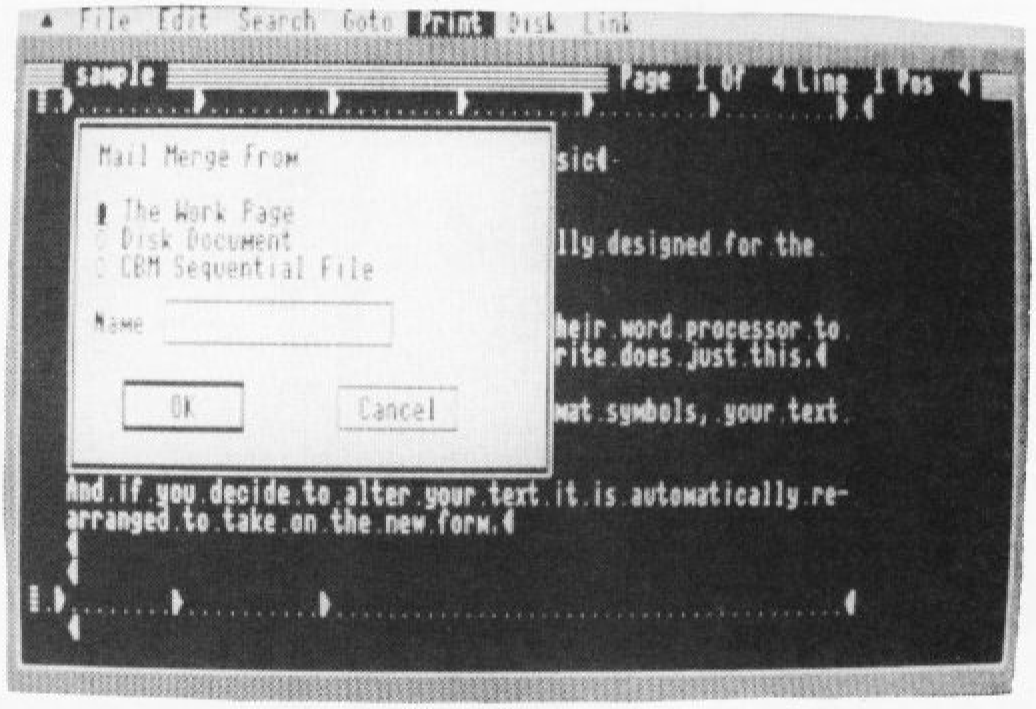
Vizawrite comes on one disk with spelling checker on the reverse, and a cartridge that contains part of the program code which wouldn't fit into the memory.

Loading up

When you've loaded up (three minutes on the 1541 but a claimed 30 seconds on the 1571) you no longer need the program disk except for the spelling checker or the sample document which illustrates the program's more useful functions.

The main improvement over Vizawrite 64 is the 80 column screen, which displays text as it will be printed out. There's also a set of pull-down menus accessed by simple key strokes.

Text memory is larger, too: 712 lines of 80 character length, amounting to about 11000 words. This total is 'dynamic', meaning that more text space is available if you make use of one of Vizawrite's classier facilities, glossary phrases.



Mail Merge is one of Vizawrite's more professional features.

Extra facilities

Glossary phrases (sometimes called keyboard macros) are strings of text you can define, save and call up using ALT and a letter of the alphabet. So you could save yourself typing a much-used letter intro by assigning it to a glossary.

The spelling checker is co-resident in memory and can be used mainly without swapping disks. The dictionary carries 30,000 words which can be added to. It also includes plurals and some unlikely words like 'aardvark'. But it won't allow you to 'paste' the correct spelling into the text. Wild cards can also be used. For example: "a???" prints out all four-letter words beginning with "a".

Mailmerge is fully supported both from memory or a file on disk which can be from any program producing ASCII sequential files. There's a set of 'help' screens which the user can edit to include any additional information. There's a pull-down calculator that allows figures to be 'pasted' into the text, and Centronics interface software.

Finally, there's a choice of three printer fonts, one of which purports to give near letter quality print. In practise, the letters are far too large for correspondence work.

Now to 64 compatibility. It is possible to read and edit files created on the 64 version of Vizawrite, but they must be renamed if they're to be saved under the new format.

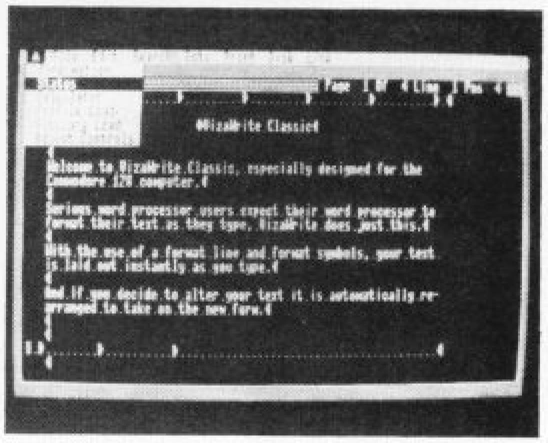
Conclusion

This is a powerful, fairly friendly program which incorporates a lot of sophisticated functions. That means it's manual must be concise and lucid.

Sadly, Vizawrite's manual leaves something to be desired. If the documentation were up to the facilities this would probably be the best word-processor for the 128 so far.

- Vizawrite Classic
- Viza Software 0634 813780
- Price: £99.95 (inc VAT)
- Format: disk plus memory cartridge

On-screen formatting and pop-up menus add to the user-friendliness.



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Tommy's tips



1571 upgrade

Q My inquiry concerns the new 1571 disk drive. I own a Commodore 64 and the 1541 disk drive, as well as quite a good software collection — mostly disk-based.

My problem is that, will I be able to run my single-sided disks that ran on the 1541, on the 1571: as this is a double-sided disk drive or will I have to convert all my single-sided disks on to double-sided disks. I would be grateful for any pearls of wisdom, advice and information that you can supply me with, thank-you.
P. Scerri, Hants.

A The only difference between the single and double sided disks are that the latter get read on both sides, giving twice the capacity: there is no other difference (in 64 mode) between disks run on a 1541 and a 1571. Provided that Commodore actually decide to market the 1571 it will read all existing 1541 disks without needing to make any changes. So far, we've only seen it inside the new 128D machine.

Sprite control

Q I have been writing a game for the Commodore 64 and have come across a couple of problems.

I'm controlling sprites by using the keys but I have to keep on tapping the key to make the sprite move. Is there any way a sprite will move with the key held down and stop when the key is lifted?

Also, can you give me the joystick commands — I can't find them in the manual.
Martyn Gay, Hants.

A In order to keep the sprite moving while a key is depressed you must make the keys auto-repeat. This is done by *POKE 650, 128* which makes *all* the keys repeat. To restore the repeats to only the cursor and space keys, type *POKE 650,0.*

As for the joysticks, there are no actual 'commands' for reading them; you have to read the joystick registers and then carry out the appropriate action depending on the values. The registers are held at 56321 (port 1) and 56320 (port 2). The five controls on the joystick are shown by the following 'bits' in the register:

Function:	N.	S.	W.	E.	Fire
Bit No:	0	1	2	3	4

If the joystick is moved in a particular direction, or the fire button is pressed, then the relevant 'bit' changes from *1* to *0*. If you want to play around with writing your own joystick routines and are not familiar with using *AND* and *OR* operators to read individual bits then either Commodore's *Programmers Reference Manual* or one of the other reference books for the 64 would be a worthwhile purchase.

Lose the keys

Q I would appreciate it very much if you could help. I have written a Noughts and Crosses program for my project at College, but there is just one problem I don't know how to solve. You are my last hope as I have consulted my Tutors at College and they cannot help.

The game is for two players, when the screen has been set up the computer then runs through a series of checks to see what keys are pressed, for this I used: IF PEEK (197) = X. X is the keycode for the key I want pressed.

When the game is over the users are prompted with the question "Do you want another game (Y/N)". After this is printed the computer then prints, without any reason, the keys that were pressed by the users during the game. It is the printing of these keys I can't manage to erase from the program.

I've tried setting the store (197) equal to 0 but the result doesn't change. I would be very grateful if you could help me.
G. Smith, Essex.

A What is happening is that you are reading the 'key press' register, not the keyboard buffer. The result is that the buffer fills up the characters as the keys are pressed until the first time you use an INPUT or GET command, then the entire contents of the buffer are printed out.

The solution is to clear the keyboard buffer before asking the 'another game?' question. This can be done by simply setting the 'no of characters in the buffer' register to zero by *POKE 198,0* in the line immediately before the INPUT prompt.

Printer problem

Q I've just bought the MPS 801 printer but I can't seem to get it working except on test. I've tried taking printouts of programs on screen but it won't work.

Could you please help me and tell me whether there's a tape, disk or cartridge for the 64 that will get the printer working.
A. Pritchard, Staffs.

A You should have got a handbook with the printer, which would give you all the information you need. However, there are three things you can carry out to test the printer which will also indicate how you can use it in your own pro-

grams. To test that the printer actually works (assuming you have the correct cable plugged in from the serial port on the computer to the printer) type the following lines exactly as shown:

```
OPEN 4,4: PRINT#4, "THIS IS
  A TEST"
CLOSE 4
```

The printer should print the words inside the inverted commas; if it does not, and you have checked that it is correctly powered up and 'on-line', then the printer would appear to be faulty and you should return it to your dealer. If this test works then type the following:

```
10 OPEN 4,4
20 PRINT#4, "THIS IS A TEST FROM A PROGRAM"
30 PRINT#4, "THIS IS THE SECOND LINE"
40 CLOSE 4: END
```

Now type RUN and the printer should print the two lines correctly. Finally, to list a program that is in the computer, type the following: *OPEN 4,4: CMD4: LIST.* When the LIST has finished, type *PRINT#4: CLOSE4.* If there wasn't a handbook with your printer I suggest you contact your dealer who can obtain one for you.

Control your sprites

Q I've consulted my manual to help me about designing some graphics on the 64.

The manual wasn't as good as I thought as this was the first time I had bothered looking through it.

I soon found out how to change the sprite colours and how to print three different sprites on the screen at once. I was pleased with myself at first but when I tried printing four different sprites at the same time a lot of rubbish came on the top of the screen.

This is my first problem, my second is how to colour the sprite graphics in different colours, and how to move them with a joystick.

I have tried looking at listings but I can't work out which bits do what. Please, please, please help me.
A. Stevens, Hants.

A When you are using sprites, you must be careful where you store them. I suspect that initially you were using the cassette buffer to store the data for the three sprites, but of course putting the data for 4 sprites there will have overwritten the top part of the screen memory, hence the rubbish on the screen. In order to have sufficient room to store a large number of sprites you must reserve an area of memory. Even then it is not straightforward since this memory must be in the same 16 kbyte 'block' as the screen memory.

The example given in the *Programmer's Reference Manual* moves the top of memory down so that you are left with only 12K of memory. However, if you move the screen and character set plus the sprite data to the 4k RAM area from $C000 (49152) then you will still have the whole of the BASIC RAM left, plus enough room for 16 sprites.

As for getting multicolour sprites, this is done by setting the relevant 'bit' in the Sprite Multi-Colour Mode register (53276). You must also set the multi-colour registers with the other 2 colours (the 4th colour being the background colour). These registers are at 53285 and 53286.

Don't forget that in multi-colour mode your sprites have only half the horizontal resoution; this means that the colour of any pixel is determined by 'pairs of bits' in the sprite data. As for moving a sprite with a joystick, this and all the other things I've mentioned, are included in the following program (note that pressing the FIRE button will change the primary sprite colour).

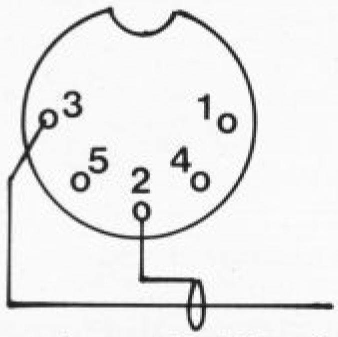
Take a tip from us, Tommy's Tips are the best. When it comes to answering your technical and programming queries, whether they're on the 64, 128, 16 or Plus/4, Tommy's your man. Go on, write to him: Tommy's Tips, Commodore User, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

Sound recorder

Q I have been using a Commodore 64 for two years now. For my birthday, my parents bought me a copy of *Ghostbusters*. I enjoyed the music track so much that I tried recording it on my cassette deck. This was impossible. I connected my deck to the AUDIO/VIDEO port, but without results. Please could you help me?
M. Teusch, Luxembourg.

A I suspect you are using the wrong pins on the audio/video socket since it is perfectly possible to record from this. You must make a cable with the centre wire connected to pin 3 of a 5-pin (or 8-pin if the later model) DIN plug and the outer screen braid connected to pin 2 of the plug. It is possible you have read the connections the wrong way round when transferring the socket diagram in the manual to the plug.

When you wire up the plug, the *reverse* of the plug (i.e. the pins facing away from you) should look like this:



If you have wired the plug correctly, then it is possible you are using the wrong input on your Hi-fi. You should use a 'line' input rather than a 'mic' input socket in order to match the impedence.

ALT on 128

Q I have been the proud owner of a 128 for the past three months, and I have a query for you.

As the manual to my computer is in German would you explain the function of the ALT key?
Neil Finnerty, BFPO 36.

A The *ALT* key functions in very much the same way as the *CTRL* or the *CBM* keys; its use is therefore determined by the program running at the time rather than it having any actual effect on its own. The ALT key is checked by the same register that checks for the CTRL, CBM, and SHIFT keys, except that in 128 mode this register is at address 211 (in 64 mode this register is at 653). The various keys set 'bits' in the register as follows:

Key press:	SHIFT	CBM	CTRL	ALT	CAPS LOCK
Bit number:	0	1	2	3	4

Thus if you PEEK (211) while the ALT key is pressed you will find a value of *8*, while if both SHIFT and ALT are pressed you will get a value of *9* etc. If you use ALT in conjunction with the function keys for example you get a further eight options since you can still use SHIFT; add the ability to set CAPS LOCK as well and you have the option of at least *40* functions from the eight 'F' keys. Note that these extra functions must be set up by your own programs; they do not exist in the machine already.

CLASSIFIED

Commodore 64 Computer and User's Guide £100. CBM 1541 disk drive £120. All together only £200. All as new. Contact Austin on Bournemouth 297611 after 4p.m.

CBM 64 Software hire, we also sell, buy latest software releases at discount prices, just say what you want. For details and free game hire voucher contact: Eagle Software, 23 Cottage Grove, Bockings Elm, Clacton, Essex CO16 8DH or phone (0255) 431067.

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White Lightning, Football Manager, DT's Decathlon, American Football, Beach Head, Elite, Word Wizard £35 or may separate. Tel. Terry, Rossendale 226684 after 6p.m.

CBM 8296, duel 4040 disk drive, Epson RX8OF/T printer, A100 Interface, Busicalc 3, Papermate Plus, FlexFile DB, Payroll, Blank Disks, Diskbox File, all manuals. £1,250 ono. Tel. Ringwood 479963 (before 6p.m.). Ask for Kevin.

Swedish CBM 64 user wants to swap programs with hackers all over the world. Only on disk. Enclose a list to: Fredrik Stakeberg, PL 1502, 440 06 Grabo, Sweden.

More than 600 CBM programs on disk legated. All for sale (cheap!). List from W. Wernersen, Postlagernd, D-2093 Stelle, W. Germany.

Simons Basic Cartridge for CBM 64. As new £18. Also Practicalc Plus Spreadsheet programme for Vic 20, unused £12. Tel. 0252 315539.

CBM 64 with C2N cassette deck and communications modem all in very good conditions. Will accept £230. A-Razi, 10 Roundhill Way, Loughborough LE11 OWF. Phone 0509-233905 after 6p.m.

Swap U.S.-Top software (only news) send your top lists to: Helmut Michl Holhsteingasse 17/43 8010 Grat Austria (have newsroom, etc. need Elevator Action, Time Tunnels).

C-64 tapes, disks, ROMS for sale Wanted: Magic Voice ROM & cheap video digitiser. John, 30 Highwood Avenue, Finchley, London N12 8QP.

Norweagian C-128 onwers want to swap programs and tips for the C-128 with people all over the world. I have only disk. Write to: Svein Egil Sorland, G770 Nordefjordeid, Norway.

Swap Commodore Plus/4 Joystick dattacorder software, Mayhem Treasure Island, Olympiad, Xargon, Wars, Harbour, Attack, many more for MSX or C/64. Phone 01-428 5624.

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1541 alignment service. With track one stop replaced on every drive. Fast turn around! Send your drive with a cheque for £12 to: Mr Miller, 31 Greenway Road, Widnes, Cheshire WA8 6HE. Tel. 051-423 5493. Compunet BM4, Prestel 514235493 price includes p&p. Tel. between 6-8pm only.

C-16 and Plus/4 software to swap: more than 100 programs, arcade games, adventures, strategy and card games, utilities, databases, etc. please write for complete list to Aldo Bordieri, Via Maiocchi 19, 20129 Milano, Italy.

C-16 owner wants penpal to swap games, listings etc. Write to Simon Richardson, 40 Darkwood Way, Shadwell LS17 8BQ or ring Leeds 661834 after 5pm.

Commodore 64 owner wants to swap programs with people all over the world. Send list to: Mikael Käleumark, Rosenlundsgatan 22D 852 51 Sundsvall, Sweden.

Superscript word processor for CBM64 £40. Phone 0303-54830 after 5.30pm.

CBM 128&64 Swedish hacker wants to swap software for the 128&64. All letters answered. Please write to Daniel Mostrom, Box 4022, 550 04 Jonkping Sweden.

Vic 20, cartridge — area memory — expansion kit for machine-code use, etc. Includes board and instructions. Just add 2K RAM or 2-4K Prom. Only £4.95 from Seddon, 63 Portland Road, Birmingham.

CBM16 games to order. Gem of Absolom, CBM Street, Maths. Tel 061 748 1697, 11 Hereford Grove, Urmston, Manchester M31 3AE.

Vic 20 penpal wanted: To exchange information and ideas. Aged between 11 and 15. Write to 18 Debonburn Road, Lesmahagon, Lanarkshire, Scotland. All letters will be answered.

C64 1541 disk drive B.W.T.V. Superscript, Superbase books and manuals, games, 1541 drive head alignment. Disk etc. Original boxes £375 ono. Callan 01-902 9110.

CBM 64 disk software. Easycalc, Easyspell, Future Finance, Fast Lane, Colossus Chess, Fourth Protocol, Busicalc, Hobbit, +280 Processor. £100 lot or will split or part exchange 1520 plotter. 0963 63540 evenings/weekends.

Bargain CBM 8032 and 8050 double disk drive, complete with cables, software, manuals and disks. Good condition. Cost £1,800, sell for £600. Tel. 01-464 7786.

Swedish C-128 owner wants to swap programs with people all over the world. Write to Thomas Vddmar, Box 8, 442 04 Kode, Sweden.

Commodore 128 owner wants to swap programs with people all over the world. Has about 1600 programs, disk only. All letters answered write and send list to Geir Atle Loite, Hanspl.vn 3, 4890 Grimstad, Norway.

Commodore 64 software on disk and cassette. I have: Karate Champion, Winter Games, Silent Service, Last V8, Dan Dare, Who Dares II, and many more new games. For more information write to N. Aritz Osdorpenweg 565, 1067st Amsterdam, Holland, or phone 020-190669.

CBM 64 user wants to correspond with similar to exchange ideas and programs. Write to Dan Nordqvist Stormvindsg 11, 723 48 Västeras, Sweden.

CBM User from Sweden wants penpals all around the world to swap ideas and games with (all games on tape). All letters answered. Write to: Martin Johansson, Nesselfjérilvägen 10, 44400 Stenungsund, Sweden.

For CBM 64 or C128 Star SG10C printer for sale. NLQ condensed, italics, enlarged printing. 120CPS, 55CPS((NLQ). All CBM graphics full compatibility with CBM 64 or C128, i.e. no interface required. £200 ono. 5 months old, still under guarantee. After 6p.m. 777 4977.

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Vic-20 penpal wanted. I am 14 years old. I would like to swap games and info. I have a 16K switchable and 400 games. Write to Ian Bell, 10 Morton Court, Blackwood, Lanarkshire, Scotland ML11 OH2. All letters answered.

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By Mike Pattenden

Hello and welcome once again to Hotshots. So nice to have you along. Come closer, I've got something I want to tell you, buy me a drink and the information's yours . . .

Cheers! Well between you and me, a grubby little hotshotophile in a dirty mac informs me of a 'naughty' party game for adults.

Saucily entitled '**Posthorn**' the game from, er, sizzling **Satyr Software** *(that's quite enough Fleet St filth from you — Page 3 Ed)* promises party fun for adults with 'little or no interest in computers'. Satyr have thoughtfully included a turbo loader on the game to get you up and running (so to speak) as quickly as possible. . . .

Scooby Dooby Doo where are you update: The on/off computer cartoon game is definitely on once again. **Elite** have now put it out for a "well known" development house to finish. The game looks set for release in May. Will it be worth a Scooby Snack . . ?

Word reaches me that there is now an analogue joystick out that is specifically available for Firebird's **Revs** racing game. If it works properly I confidently expect it to transform *Revs* into the classiest racing simulation for the 64. More information from Meedmore Distribution on 051 521 2202 and can they please send me one . . .

It's time for a car update. Just to show you the industry's making as much money as ever out of you all, the sports cars keep rolling out.

Thrifty **Steve Wilcox**, big boss of **Elite**, just invested profits from *Commando* in a secondhand gold Turbo Esprit. Meanwhile over at **Melbourne House** those *Fist* sales have led to another Porsche and a BMW rolling in . . .

Allo, allo, allo it's silly mailout time again. So far this week I've received a helmet and a truncheon through the post. Putting two and two together I cleverly deduced that a police game was on the way.

And I was right. It's called **The Force** and it's a strategy game from **Argus** that's being produced with police co-operation. You might say that they're helping Argus with their enquiries.

Anyway you play the part of a superintendent facing difficult situations that you must handle with tact and discretion. Sounds like they could use a copy at **Hendon** . . .

Whilst we're on the subject of silly mailouts, **English Software**, unable to produce **Elektra Glide** on time, plumped instead for a key ring with a steel block on the end of the chain. I dutifully put my house keys on it. There's now a hole in my pocket — hope the game doesn't have the same effect when they price it . . .

You may remember me mentioning **Domark's** poor taste and the adverse reactions they received when **Friday 13th** appeared last December. Well we received a very humble note saying they'd withdrawn the adverts in a grand gesture to public decency.

Truth of the matter is they got slapped by the **Advertising Standards Authority** after complaints against the artwork were upheld. A funny coincidence is that's my birthday so get those pressies off now, I don't mind if they're a bit late . . .

Equally offensive though is **US Gold's** vile sexist advert for a duff looking game entitled *Legend of the Amazon Women*. It depicts scantily clad creatures with deformed limbs and big bums and *(that's quite enough of that* — Ed.) Perhaps the artist's hand was shaking too much when he drew it . . .

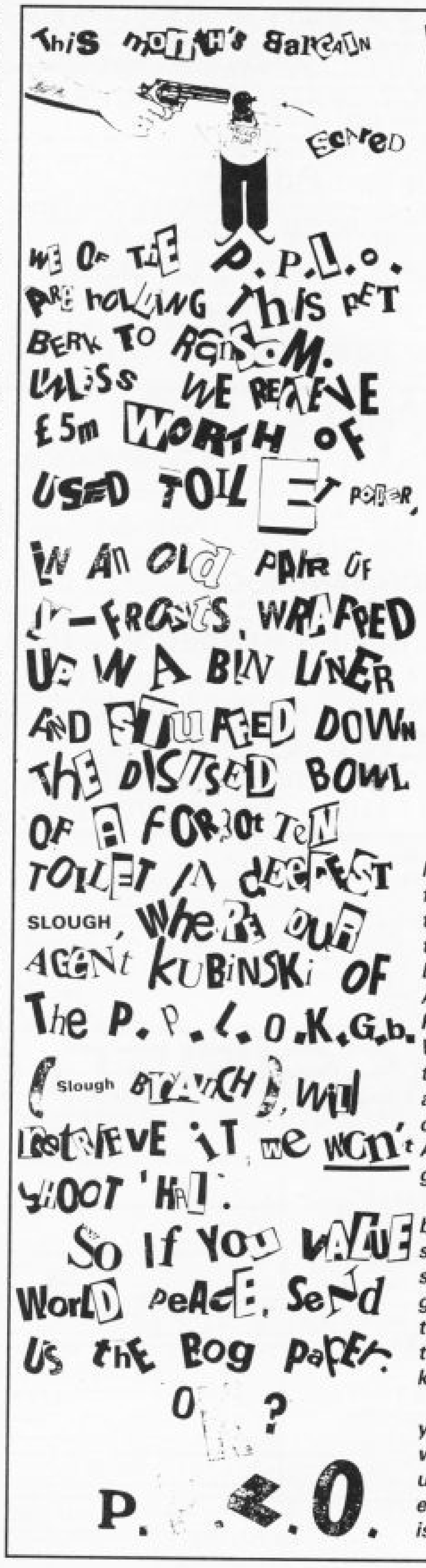
Commodore Crash Shock! There was so much excitement at the prospect of seeing a real (gasp) **Amiga** at the Which Computer Show recently that the floor of the Commodore stand collapsed completely sending thousands of pounds of redundant (whoops) hardware crashing to the ground. Is this an omen for the future I wonder? The way I see it if Commodore go on cocking things up there won't be a company by the end of the year.

Meanwhile, Commodore bigwigs sweat it out as they contemplate repaying the loans they received.

And that's it for this month. So long sleaze lovers, keep those ears to the ground . . . **Mike Pattenden**

"Right, you're nicked on suspicion of promoting a criminally stupid piece of software for Argus." Argus Software staff cause a disturbance whilst impersonating police officers impersonating a successful software house, whilst impersonating a funny photo.





More poisonous mail filters through the system to Priory Court. There's a terrible campaign of hate being waged against Activision's Computer People down in Slough. Who is responsible for these acts of violence against the pet people? An office cynic suggested Activision themselves. All good publicity eh?

Has Andrew Wright been busy with the Pritt stick or are there more sinister faces behind this grisly business? I demand to know the truth. Who is the PPLO? Make yourself known.

As for the little berk you're holding our budget won't extend to all that used bog paper. Will the entire set of Zzap back issues do instead . . ?

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*Screen as seen on Commodore 64

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